

# THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM

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## *Contents*

REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS	- - - - -	William Zukerman	155
ETCHING IN CHARCOAL— <i>A Poem</i>	- - - - -	Eleanor Alletta Chaffee	163
THE MATURITY OF HOLLYWOOD	- - - - -	Harold U. Ribalow	164
HUMOR IN JEWISH FOLKLORE	- - - - -	A. A. Roback	167
FREEDOM	- - - - -	Alfred J. Hotz	174
THE NAVAHO'S TRAGEDY	- - - - -	Ruth Falkenburg Kirk	176
THE DELICATE SHELL— <i>A Short Story</i>	- - - - -	Eliot L. Wagner	182
CHANGE— <i>A Poem</i>	- - - - -	Harold Applebaum	188
GERMANY'S DEMOGRAPHIC WAR	- - - - -	Alfred Werner	189
TORAH AND WISDOM— <i>Wood Sculpture</i>	- - - - -	Berel Satt	196
MIDWESTERN COMMENTARY	- - - - -	Elmer Gertz	197
FREEDOM OF RELIGION— <i>From a Lithograph</i>	- - - - -	A. Raymond Katz	202
NEW YORK NOTES	- - - - -	Vero	203
PROMENADE— <i>Wood Sculpture</i>	- - - - -	Berel Satt	207
WASHINGTON NOTES	- - - - -	Murray Frank	208
WEST COAST LETTER	- - - - -	Carey McWilliams	213
BOOK REVIEWS	- - - - -		218-230

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# Refugees and Immigrants

By WILLIAM ZUKERMAN

THERE IS NOT a more fascinating scene to watch in these United States than the periodic mass movements of immigrants arriving to these shores from Europe. It is remarkably like the beating of mighty waves upon an ocean shore. There is the same rhythmic quality in it, the same feeling of universality and of mystery behind the unknown forces which hurl these waves of uprooted humanity from one continent to another. There is something vast and almost awe-inspiring in this epic panorama of the greatest reshuffling of populations since the Transmigration of Nations from Asia to Europe. It is more than a mechanical process of transportation, visas and quotas. It is primarily a psychological drama of pathos, tragedy, and hope and it is usually accompanied by an emotional upheaval which has to do more with the minds and souls of people than with their physical and economic changes. Its psychological impact upon people, nations and countries is not less pungent than wars, depressions, revolutions, and other eruptions which convulse our society of today.

The best spot in the world to observe this great panorama is, of course, the United States. Not that the movement is limited to these shores only. It flows also to a number of other countries overseas, to the South Americas, South Africa, and Australia. A miniature replica of it can be seen also in the fierce beating of the immigration waves on the shores of the Mediterranean, especially in the concentrated intensity of the rush of Jews from Eastern Europe to Palestine. But the United States, despite its restrictions and

quotas, is still the classic shore of immigration and the movement can best be observed here in all its grandeur and complexity.

Of the many immigrant groups in the United States, the Jewish group lends itself more readily than others to such observation. As a group, these immigrants are more pronounced and outstanding than others and they retain their characteristics longer. This group has also another peculiar characteristic:—it is, despite its strong collective individuality, less a single group than other nationalities. There are as many Jewish immigrant groups in this country as there are countries from which they have come and in most cases they reflect more the culture and psychology of the people among whom they lived before they emigrated than they do their specific Jewish characteristics. One can thus get a glimpse of the entire American immigrant scene and of the process of integration into American life as it is going on among the Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, German, French, and other immigrants by following the Jews from those countries. In a sense, the Jewish immigrant groups reflect in miniature the entire process of immigrant adjustment in America and a study of them offers a sort of short-cut to the understanding of immigrant psychology in America in general.

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From the beginning of this century, three distinct waves of Jewish immigrants began and almost finished their cycles on these shores. Each was as distinct from the other as if it were made

up of people of different nationalities; each adjusted itself differently to the New Land and each contributed something of its own to the new life and culture before it was swallowed by the great American sea. The first and largest group was that of Russian Jews which started at the turn of the century and reached its climax before the First World War. The second group was that of Polish Jews which came over in smaller numbers from 1920 to the rise of Hitlerism. The third was that of the so-called Refugees from Germany which began in the early 'Thirties and reached its peak before the Second World War. A fourth group is already coming in now, that of D.P's., but this one is just in its incipency and little, if anything at all, can be said yet about its adjustment to the New World.

The Russian group was by far the most numerous and left the deepest mark on Jewish life in the United States. It began with the outbreak of the first anti-Jewish pogroms in Czaristic Russia in 1881 and it opened the sluice gates of East-European Jewish immigration into the United States. Two facts dominated Russian life of that period and both affected the newly arrived immigrants. One was the tyranny of the Czars, the oldest and vastest reaction in Europe of that time; the second was the early Russian Revolutionary movement which had just begun its career and was then in its most idealistic and romantic period. The new arrivals were mostly imbued with the spirit of revolt against tyranny and oppression and with an almost religious zeal for Socialism, internationalism, and the brotherhood of man which characterized the Russian Revolutionary movement of that period. That spirit found expression in a series of great strikes by the new immigrants against the sweatshops and exploitation of that period, in the upbuilding of a vast progressive Trade Union movement, and in a rich colorful cultural life, in a flowering of Yiddish literature,

drama, and theatre, in a large press, and in a passionate party strife. In the heyday of its power this group exerted a strong influence on Jewish life in the United States and for a certain length of time the spirit of revolutionary humanitarianism which it had brought with it colored perceptibly even the American non-Jewish Liberal and Labor movements in America. Old American Liberals like Norman Hapgood and others used to come to the east side of New York for inspiration, and the early American radicals, from Debs, Haywood, and onwards, found their greatest following among these people and were in their turn influenced by the newcomers.

The influence of this Russian group had begun to wane by the end of the First World War. Economic and social conditions of the Russian Jewish immigrants had by that time changed considerably from sweatshop exploitation and slum poverty to a considerably higher standard of living. With this improvement much of the former revolutionary spirit evaporated. The process of Americanization was working fast among these immigrants and was accelerated by their internationalism and cosmopolitanism, and by their gratitude to and glorification of America where they had found for the first time freedom, equality, and prosperity. It is quite possible that these people might by now have disappeared entirely as a distinct group in the great American sea, if not for the rise of Hitlerism and anti-Semitism in Europe after the first World War, and if not for the influx of a new and entirely different group of Jewish immigrants which began to appear in this country on the crest of another great wave.

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This second group consisted mostly of Polish Jews, who differed from their Russian co-religionists as the Poles differ from the Russians. They lacked the naive idealism of the Russian Jews, their easy



good nature and sentimentality. They made up for that with a tremendous vitality and fiery temperament, with an intense emotionalism which often reached a semi-religious mysticism easily passing into fanaticism. They were on the whole a more determined and energetic people, more active and pushing than the generally ineffectual Russians, and they easily swept away the older immigrants from leadership and assumed the initiative in immigrant Jewish life in this country. Their most outstanding contribution to American Jewish life was an intense nationalism which they had acquired under the pressure of Polish anti-Semitism, even as the earlier Russian immigrants acquired their Socialism under the influence of the Russian society of that period.

The Polish Republic began its career of political independence after the First World War with an outburst of anti-Semitism which was something new in racial hatred and doubtless was the psychological precursor of Nazism. It was primarily pathological in its nature and probably stemmed from the Poles' own nationalistic frustrations of centuries. Its chief aim was to humiliate and degrade the Jews, and it was accompanied also by political, economic, and social persecution. For two decades the cities of Poland were the scene of the most humiliating and brutal public beatings of Jews in the streets, parks, public places, and Universities which had ever been known in pre-Nazi Europe and which certainly paved the way for the horrors of the Nazi death camps during the war.

The effect of such a treatment on the proud and gifted Polish Jews was more disastrous than all the economic, political, and social persecutions of the anti-Semitic regime. It embittered and frustrated them; it strengthened their feeling of isolation from the non-Jewish world which had just then begun to break down, and it fostered a feeling of intense nationalism of their own which, in ferocity, was not

unlike that of their Polish tormentors, although it was devised chiefly as a defense-mechanism for the preservation of their human dignity. Both of these manifestations, the pathological anti-Semitism and resultant nationalism, were chiefly responsible for the intense drive of the Polish Jews to escape from Poland and other East-European countries which led to the remarkable feat of upbuilding in less than two decades the present Jewish settlement in Palestine. It also started a new wave of Jewish immigration to the United States.

These immigrants brought with them a new impetus, a new zeal, and above all a new consciousness of Jewishness and pride of race which the earlier immigrants never dreamed of. There can be no doubt that this was their chief contribution to Jewish life in America. A product of Europe between the two World Wars, it swept Jewish life in this country with an intensity and passion never known before. It carried away without much difficulty the leadership of the Russian Jews and diluted their socialism and internationalism with a heavy dose of the new nationalism. It invaded the hitherto untouched Jewish Orthodoxy and injected for the first time in many centuries a heavy nationalistic strain into the Jewish religion. Above all, it affected even considerable sections of native-born American Jews who had before that seldom thought of themselves as Jews. The American Zionist movement, for two generations a liberal and humanitarian movement of great distinction, has become within two decades the most militant of all Zionist movements in the world, not excluding Palestine. It is from here that the moral and financial support comes for all the extremist nationalistic views and movements which threw Palestine into its present bloody turmoil. A section of American Jews is deliberately aspiring to take over the nationalistic leadership of the Jewish people the world over, previ-

ously held by the Polish Jews, and to play in the Zionist movement, the same role that the American Irish played in the independence movement of the Free State nearly a generation ago.

Of course, much of this has to be attributed to the anti-Semitic holocaust of the Nazis which resulted in the deliberate execution of six million Jews and to the feeling of fear and insecurity which this act, quite naturally, called forth among Jews all over the world. But a comparison between Jewish communities in other countries and in the United States will easily establish that Jewish nationalism in this country is by far more extremist and militant than anywhere else. And this must be attributed, at least in part, to the impact of Polish nationalism upon American Jewry. There are indications now that this impact has already passed its crest and that what we are witnessing now is only the aftermath of a storm which has already spent itself. New forces and new trends are now working in immigrant Jewish life and are affecting profoundly both Jewish and American life. Among these new forces, the group of immigrants which goes under the name of Refugees is clearly playing a decisive role.

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The Refugees, who began to come over in the early Thirties, hailed mostly from Germany, although not exclusively from there, for with the advance of Hitlerism, the term Refugee assumed a wider meaning and is applied to people in most countries of Western Europe who had to flee from the rising might of Nazism. The bulk of the Refugees, however, has been and remained German. As a group, they are the smallest, least vociferous, least distinctively Jewish group of immigrants that has ever come to these shores. It is also as a group, socially, psychologically, and in every other way the exact contradiction to the earlier Polish group which, incidentally dislikes the Refugees in-

tensely and does not disguise its dislike. Nevertheless, this group is by far the most interesting to observe, especially against the background of the earlier immigrants, as a study of immigration in this country.

From the very beginning the Refugees had a great advantage over the older Jewish immigrants. This was their greater cultural affinity with the non-Jewish American majority. Most other Jewish immigrants came to this country from Eastern Europe, a part of the world whose civilization and culture are so remote from those of the United States as to have made the process of their adjustment to the new country the most difficult problem of their new life. The first years of these immigrants, whether they came from Russia, Poland, or any other part of Eastern Europe, were years of tragic exile, shot through with the pain of longing for the old home which was the source of most immigrant suffering and psychological maladjustment. The tendency to clannishness and segregation and the pathetic and futile attempts to reproduce the old home on the new soil which are typical of most immigrants were a direct result of this fundamental immigrant malady. In spite of the sincere love for and devotion to America and an ardent desire to blend completely with its life, the average East-European immigrant, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, seldom attains this, his heart's greatest desire. Like Moses and the desert generation, he can never enter in spirit the land of his greatest love; he is condemned to live in his nostalgic past more than in his present.

Not so with the Refugees. They are the first Jewish immigrants to this country who entered the Promised Land not only in body, but also in spirit. They are a product of pre-Hitlerite Germany which was in form and in content a growth of the western industrial civilization which was originated in England and stream-

lined in the United States and Germany. No other country in Europe was more 'Americanized' than was Germany between the two World Wars and no other people was more enamored of Anglo-American culture and imitated it more consciously than the German middle-class and *intelligentzia* of that period from which the Refugees came. This affinity, together with a background of three generations of Western culture common with the United States, made these people peculiarly adaptable to America. It helped them cross the painful no-man's land between the immigrants' old home and the new in an amazingly short time and paved their way for an almost perfect integration. Their Americanization began almost from the day they put their foot on American soil and it was so swift and thorough that it never ceased to be a source of amazement to other immigrants. They not only master the American language in a surprisingly short period of time and speak it almost without an accent (except for a soft, not-unpleasant German intonation), but they somehow manage to acquire also American manners and ways of life and they embrace American culture as the East European immigrant can never do. The latter, particularly the Russians, probably had even a more passionate desire for Americanization than the Germans, but they lacked the ability of the Refugees to realize it. For these people seem to be endowed with a special gift amounting almost to an art for striking roots deeply and rapidly in the American soil. This is doubtless their group peculiarity and upon this rests their chief contribution to the new country.

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It is, of course, difficult to generalize about the group psychology of the Refugees as it is about that of any other people. Like others, they are not a homogeneous group, and consist of people of different social, economic, and cultural

strata who are distinct from each other. There is, for instance, among them a small group of well-to-do people who had managed to escape with their wealth from the ravages of Hitlerism and were hardly touched by it economically or psychologically. They have retained some of the ostentatiousness and gaudiness of their old *Kurfuerstendam* and are, in spite of their good taste in dressing and living, not a pleasant class as a whole. Then there is also another small section of Refugees who formed the top of the intellectual, artistic, and scientific world of pre-war Europe and who have brought over their intellectual riches to this country and are profoundly affecting American academic and artistic life.

But these are very small sections which, although they usually attract most public attention, nevertheless are not typical of the group as a whole. The bulk of the Refugees consists of people of the lower middle class of Germany before Hitler, former small shopkeepers, artisans, mechanics, technicians, dentists, doctors, lawyers, professionals of all kinds, clerks and white-collar people. Most of them had lost their property in the inflation after the First World War and have nothing but memories of the better days when each had a comfortable little home and a stable and secure life. They were the first victims of the economic blizzard which raged in Germany in the early 'Twenties and they were also the first to be caught in the political storm which followed the economic, and they had been whirling in it like Autumn leaves until they landed on these shores.

In this country they started, like most other immigrants, from the bottom of the economic ladder and most of them are still struggling on the lowest rungs of it. One can see them neatly dressed, with a hint of the former dignity, climbing steps, ringing bells, trying to sell soap, brushes, stationery, and all sorts of household utensils. Some work in shops, stores, fac-

tories, and in small business establishments for which, like most middle-class people, they have a decided preference. They do not disdain or refuse any work, as the records of the employment agencies of the various Refugee organizations show. Former well-to-do business men who employed many clerks, readily work ten and twelve hours a day picking rags, washing dishes and bottles; former doctors of philosophy scrub floors, and engage in other menial occupations. They do so without self-pity and without the exaggerated humility which is a sign of snobbery. They know that they are the victims of a great social hurricane for which the individual cannot be held responsible and this helps them carry their heavy burden without an exaggerated feeling of inferiority which was the lot of most earlier immigrants.

As a working group, these people are less rebellious in spirit and in action than were the Russian immigrants in the early days of their exploitation. They are so glad to be alive and in a free country that they readily overlook grievous injustices unfortunately committed against them by their employers and even by organizations which are supposed to help them. As a group they are pathetically docile and obedient, particularly as compared with the Russian and even with the Polish Jewish immigrants, although they were used to a higher standard of living and comfort. They tend to accept their hardships as their cross, or as part payment which the new land exacts from them for their release from Nazism. They seldom complain of America or compare it unfavorably with their old Home as was the case in the early years of the older immigrants. They lack both the revolutionary spirit as well as the tendency for self-pity which was so strong in the earlier arrivals.

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They are mostly middle-aged and elderly people who had traveled a very

long and incredibly hard road of exile and persecution until they reached a place of refuge, and now their greatest desire is to cling to it. They are not a very ambitious people as a group. They certainly lack the eagerness for success which was the driving force of the earlier Jewish immigrants both Russian and Polish. They do not, as a rule aspire to great material wealth. Perhaps this is due to the fact that, unlike the earlier immigrants, they were never very poor; some of them knew even wealth and almost all lived better than the average East-European Jewish immigrants before they came to this country. Perhaps the tragic quality of their experience of the last eventful years of their persecution and exile has taught them the futility of wealth. Whatever the reasons, they have not the terrific urge for American success which was the obsession of the earlier immigrants. Theirs is the ambition of the average middle-class person which does not go further than the opening of a little business of his own and to become independent economically and spiritually. They have the advantage above other people of similar aspirations that they are, as most Germans, remarkably efficient and thorough in everything they do. Upper New York and the West End of London are now studded with tasteful little shops and enterprises where the old, pre-war German 'Gemuetlichkeit' is found again in all its pristine peaceful atmosphere. One sees it in the neat little bakery shops, home-made candy stores, in the small clean restaurants, tastefully furnished with an air of the lost European Continent about them, or in the little art shops, flower shops, antique shops, music and book stores where one gets old-world personal service instead of the mechanized salesmanship of the modern chain and department stores.

Some of these people have gone through gruesome and harrowing experiences in German and in other concentration camps,



although the bulk of them escaped the horrors of the Nazi torture chambers because they had left Germany before the Nazi atrocities reached their apex. Their greatest experience is their exile, the long and almost incredible Odyssey of their escape from country to country as the Nazis advanced through Europe, until they reached their present sanctuary. They are, as a group, a people who have ESCAPED danger and suffering, not those who actually suffered the greatest pain and horror of the age, as have for instance, the Displaced Persons who are now following them in a new immigration wave. Their most wonderful stories are those of FLIGHT and miraculous ESCAPE and one day, they or their children will fascinate the world with accounts of wonderful adventures of the greatest and cruelest man-hunt in history, as told by the hunted who have managed to escape.

But at present they do not, as a rule, like to talk about these experiences. They are anxious to forget, not to remember. In this respect they differ once more from the earlier Jewish immigrants who lived a lifetime in a nostalgic past. Being human, they still love the place of their birth and when they are alone with themselves, they speak German and think lovingly of old Germany. But they know that that world lies buried in the rubble of the war and of Nazism and will not be revived, at least not in their generation. They know that, as far as they are concerned, the past is gone forever and there is no return to it. Their greatest concern is with striking roots in the new soil which they love with the same pathetic gratitude that is typical of most Jewish immigrants in this country. But theirs is a more whole-hearted love, simpler and more wholesome. It has none of the elements of doubt and division of loyalty in it. They are not torn by a conflict for their old homes, or other dream-homelands which their nostalgia has created as an escape. They have no need for

another home, be it spiritual, national, or a dreamland. America fulfils for them all their inner aspirations and longings, even as Palestine does for some and Soviet Russia for other Jewish immigrants.

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In one other respect they differ from the earlier Jewish immigrants before them. As a group they have no 'mission' of any kind, neither Socialism, Nationalism, or any other 'ism'. They are not obsessed with the idea that it is their destiny to save the Jewish people, or to pave the way for the millenium for other people. In fact, there is nothing Messianic, or crusading about them. They are simple, common folk, unsophisticated and not too shrewd and intellectual, although they have among them some of the greatest scientists, artists, and philosophers of our age. They have no ideologies and are not conscious of any destinies. If they can be said to have a conscious ideal, it is to adjust themselves fully to their new home and to bring up their children not as misfits in the New World. In this they are succeeding more rapidly than many another immigrant group. Their family ties are definitely stronger than those of the arrivals from Eastern-Europe, Jews and non-Jews alike. And this because the distance between them and their Americanized children is not as great as among other immigrants. Their children as a rule do not feel the great abyss which lies between their European parents and themselves and this does away with the most prolific source of immigrant tragedy in this country. Their children respect their parents, are devoted to them, and lack that ill-disguised contempt of Americanized children for their immigrant parents which is the greatest cause of the disintegration of the immigrant family in the United States. Both parents and children march in step in the process of Americanization and that common aim brings them still nearer to each other.



Another distinctive characteristic of theirs is their relationship with the non-Jewish people in the New World. They get along better with their non-Jewish American neighbors than do other Jewish immigrants who have lived in this country for decades. The fact is that most of them get along better with non-Jews than with their 'brethren' from Eastern Europe. This is not at all paradoxical, for the bulk of them have never been in a ghetto and they have not been cut off from contact with non-Jews. They have lived with non-Jews all their lives and so had their parents and grandparents before them, and they have learned by generations of experience the fine art of integration and the tact that is necessary for a minority to live in the midst of a majority without provoking or awakening the always dormant hostility existing between the two. They have not the instinctive fear of the non-Jewish world which has darkened and oppressed the minds and lives of East-European Jews wherever they are. They need no special mechanism, psychological or national, to overcome the self consciousness of being different. The clan instinct and the tendency to huddle together is also weaker among them. After the first difficult years of their immigration, they prefer to leave the crowded Jewish centers and to spread out throughout the United States, particularly in the smaller communities. The percentage of their distribution throughout the country is incomparably higher than that of other Jewish immigrants.

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But most striking of all is their attitude towards Judaism and the Jewish problem. In this, their contrast with the older Jewish immigrants is complete. The difference, like all true differences, is psychological and spiritual, not merely political or economic. For instance, many Refugees are good Zionists, but their Zionism is of the type of the older humani-

tarian relief movement that existed in the Western world, including the United States, before the rise of Hitlerism. It is not shot through with the morbid nationalistic emotionalism of recent years. They believe in economic, even in political Zionism, but they do not let their beliefs sweep them into the emotional vortex of extremism which makes of the struggle in Palestine a holy war for the Arab and Zionist fanatics alike. They do not let national fanaticism obscure their Western heritage of liberalism, tolerance, and ability to see the point of view of an opponent.

Somewhat similar is their attitude towards anti-Semitism. Although they were the first victims of Nazi anti-Semitism, the worst brand in history, and they have suffered from it directly, not vicariously as most Jews in the United States, they have nevertheless managed to escape the excesses of morbidity with which Nazism has injected many Jews. They have not become embittered; they bear no eternal grudge against the Christian world; they have not lost their nerve, nor hope in humanity. They have not lost their mental balance and have not been swept away by fear. They do not minimize the evil of anti-Semitism nor its dangers, but they are able to regard the evil against the background of other world events and see it not as an isolated Jewish problem, or as a freak scourge sent by God to punish the Jews only. They see it as part of humanity's greater evil of the age, a symptom of the general illness of the social organism which must be cured if humanity as a whole is to live. This, even if it gives no immediate practical relief, gives them a feeling of greater inner security; it strengthens their bond of comradeship with the rest of mankind and banishes the feeling of loneliness and *anticipation* of trouble which now is the cause of more actual suffering in many Jews than anti-Semitism itself.

Above all, the question of their Jewish-

ness has not become with them the morbid problem that it is with many Jews. It is not a complex of conflicting frustration, doubts, and fears. To be a Jew is to them not a source of ecstasy or glory, nor of tragedy and misfortune. They are not obsessed with the idea that they are the last "reservoir" of a chosen race that must be preserved lest the Universe crash. They are not constantly pre-occupied with their Jewishness and they do not make it the yardstick of all values. Like their attitude towards anti-Semitism, the attitude towards Jewishness is balanced within the larger frame of world events and human problems. They do not forget that they are human beings, not only Jews; a part of mankind, not only of a national group.

These convictions which are not conscious in most of them, but work sub-

consciously in the group as a common heritage of more than a hundred and fifty years emancipation and of a blending of Western and Jewish civilizations, give them now, in a time of crisis, an inner calm and peace of mind which the older Jewish immigrants do not possess. They are, in fact, the only group in American Jewry at present which has been less morbidly affected by the terrific storm which Nazism and its aftermath have quite understandably raised in Jewish life. Because of this they can exert unconsciously a calming and stabilizing influence on a badly shaken people in a time of great tension and crisis. It is this influence, together with their special gift for Americanization, that constitute their significant contribution to American Jews and to the American immigrant scene in general.

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## ETCHING IN CHARCOAL

*By ELEANOR ALLETTA CHAFFEE*

I shall remember forever the dying gull  
Limp on the sand, with sunset in his eyes,  
Flaming where life had faded, turning toward  
Lost horizons and strange and threatening skies  
One last look. I shall remember while I live  
The terrible dignity facing inevitable death:  
The stained grey feathers on the unquiet breast  
Pulsing unevenly with every breath.  
For I have known that look, remote, withdrawn,  
In captives whose blood is mine: is not the world  
The house we all live in, and shrink together  
From the dark doom that from the sky is hurled?  
And as I could feel on my hand the draggled feathers,  
So on my heart I can feel the crushing weight  
Of hands against locked doors, and know the grief  
That strikes my own with the two-edged blade of hate.

# *The Maturity of Hollywood*

## **An Inquiry Into Pictures on Anti-Semitism**

By HAROLD U. RIBALOW

**H**OLLYWOOD, the Land of Make Believe, has begun to learn the facts of life. Always escapist, never interested in anything beyond "sheer entertainment," the movie-makers have begun to explore seriously the matter of Jews in America. Because "Jewish life" as such generally begins—among the "Goyim"—with negative aspects, Hollywood's recent crusade to seek equality for the Jew has been fired by stories concerning anti-Semitism.

The recent cycle of Hollywood films about Jews is now reaching a climax. One of the first was "The Jolson Story," actually a musical. But as the hero was the son of a cantor, the Jewish angle was neatly interjected into the narrative. The fact that there were some glaring errors in projecting Jews, and despite the slurring over of the fact that a cantor would not be on the chummy terms the movie-cantor was with the Catholic priest, the Jew as such had begun to make an impact.

The next major picture dealing with Jews was "Crossfire," a melodramatic murder story, in which the killer commits his crime only because he hates Jews. Beautifully directed, harshly-told and strongly projected, "Crossfire" aroused a good deal of controversy. The American Jewish Committee magazine "Commentary," went out on a campaign to deny the effect of such pictures on the average, liberal American. Because the killer in "Crossfire" was obviously not an "average" person, and because the film was

dipped in violence, the opponents of the film said that it would arouse anti-Semitism, not still it.

The story of "Crossfire" is a simple one. An ex-soldier kills a Jew, only because he hates Jews. The detective in the tale searches for a motive, finally realizes that the murderer's reason is Jew-hating, and then traps the killer—but not before he finds the opportunity to deliver a powerful speech decrying intolerance towards any people.

To the ordinary movie-goer, "Crossfire" was not only an exciting detective story; it was good propaganda. At the box-office "Crossfire" made money. It deserves every success. It marked the opening gun, forthright and unafraid, in the campaign against Jew-hating.

Unfortunately, it did not deal with Jews as such, but with people who disliked Jews. Thus, the Jew in the film hardly counts. He is a symbol. The actual major protagonist is the killer. Yet he, too, is not deeply drawn. There is no analysis as to his motives. Why does he hate Jews? What started him on his chain of hatred? The movie doesn't attempt to say. It restricts its view, and thus, its total effect. As is, it is a tour de force, but it does not probe.

"Gentleman's Agreement," the latest film on anti-Semitism, does not deal with violence. Its theme is "social anti-Semitism," the kind of Jew-hating which is condoned by millions of Americans who

are hardly aware of their own prejudices. In a recent poll taken by Elmo Roper, it was revealed that about one-third of the people in the United States think the Jews have more power than they should have in proportion to their numbers in this country. This indicates a latent dislike of Jews in practically every third Gentile. The inference is shocking enough. It makes the theme of "Gentleman's Agreement" more valid than at first it seemed.

When Laura Hobson's best-selling novel "Gentleman's Agreement" began to sweep the country, many Jewish critics said that it was superficial, that it didn't go far enough in its probings, that the social discrimination of the Jews was and remains a minor key in the total tragedy of world Jewry. In a sense, these critics were right; but Mrs. Hobson did not intend her book to be a definite study on anti-Semitism. Merely because she kept it on a "woman's magazine" level; because she dealt with "correct" people who themselves would deny their bias, makes the novel one which can capture the imagination of precisely those people who, in their conscious minds, hardly think of Jews. It is these people she wanted to read her book, for it was these people she was writing about.

It may be a harsh thing to say, in the light of the comparative literary stature of the novelists involved, but the intense self-flagellation of Ludwig Lewisohn wins fewer readers than the polished slick style of Laura Hobson. While this does not make Hobson the better writer, it does make her the more effective propagandist. The first object of a propagandist, obviously, is to be read. In using the word "propaganda" no slight is intended. When Lewisohn sermonizes in his brilliant manner, in his fine books, he appeals to possibly thousands of readers. Hobson, writing a "romance" packaged with a sermon, has appealed to millions. As a preachment in tolerance, which is the more effective?

There seems to be little doubt as to the

answer. And if there is any, the motion picture version of "Gentleman's Agreement" banishes it. Here Hollywood has improved upon the novel by giving deeper dimensions to the characters. The Gentile who becomes a Jew for a few weeks in order to be able to understand better the Jewish plight in America and, thereby write a good series of articles on anti-Semitism, is played by Gregory Peck. Psychologically, this is a shrewd move in Hollywood symbolism. Over the past few years, Peck has become, in the minds of Americans, the gentle, handsome lover, beloved by Ingrid Bergman down to other Hollywood glamor girls. But here he is projected, for a short time, it is true, but actually projected, as a Jew! Yes, the spectator knows that, really, he is only making believe he is a Jew. But the projection is made and the movie-goer, the dream-lover of Gregory Peck, suffers with him.

In statistics there is no tragedy; in human people there is infinite tragedy. Hence, Gregory Peck, harried, persecuted and discriminated against; his son beaten; his love destroyed—because he is a Jew—makes a greater impact on the average American public than the gory, shocking pictures of Jewish victims of concentration camps, which were shown throughout America a few years ago. Perhaps we all lack a real sense of values, but there is no blinking it.

Gregory Peck as a journalist who, for six weeks, is a Jew; John Garfield, the screen tough guy, who plays the role of a Jew who knows that one cannot telescope into six weeks the entire lifetime of the agony of being hated, driven and persecuted; Dorothy McGuire, the lovely "Claudia," who comes up against the fact of anti-Semitism, offer a stronger argument for tolerance than most propaganda in any of its forms.

The screen, as Max Lerner says, "is potentially the great mass-art of our century and civilization, the unacknowledged







# Humor in Jewish Folklore

By A. A. ROBACK

FOLKLORE AS A STUDY is gradually coming into its own. Hardly more than a century since the first Folklore Society was founded, it has become one of the pivots of recent sociology and anthropology, and is undoubtedly the most entertaining phase of either of these two sciences.

Folklore has been defined variously, but for our purpose it is sufficient to say that it is the traditional learning of the untutored among civilized peoples as well as the products of the tribal mind in primitive society. The chief emphasis is on the collective spirit. Even though individuals may be the authors or originators of some custom, belief, or proverb, it is the immediate acceptance by the tribe or community that stamps it as a piece of folklore.

In general, the subject-matter of folklore falls into three large divisions; (a) customs and beliefs, including, of course, superstitions; (b) the spoken word, in a social and national setting, which category would embrace folk tales, myths, fairy stories and nursery rhymes, nicknames, proverbs, and even idioms or similes; and (c) folk-art, like ballads, folk-songs, and folk-dances. When it is considered that J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* alone occupies a whole book shelf, dealing with only one aspect of folklore, the vastness of the field becomes evident even to the beginner; and new and newer segments of human endeavor are constantly being added to the area. Thus it is becoming clearer from year to year that humor may occupy a respectable position in the general scheme of folklore, since

it represents the genius of a particular people.

Humor, in itself, is no mean or slight subject. It contains at least a dozen subdivisions, but some of them pass from the folkloristic stage to that of individual cultural production, e.g. wit, which cannot be distilled in a primitive setting. The common denominator of humor is probably the joke or funny story, which is accessible to all of average intelligence, but as we shall see presently by means of illustrations, not all jokes belong to the realm of folklore.

## *Neglect of Subject Among Jews*

At this point we are prepared for the question: Have the Jews their share in this fascinating world? Naturally, if the Hottentots, and the Maoris, and the Tierra del Fuegians have their folklore, it might well be expected that an ancient people, like the Jews, whose experiences have run the gamut from the loftiest exaltation to the deepest despair, would surely make a good showing for themselves in this connection; but from the bibliography extant, and particularly the material found in the university libraries, let alone public libraries, one wonders whether the Jews were remiss in cultivating their garden or whether there is a conspiracy to slight the Jewish contribution. Actually, it would appear that both negative forces have been at work.

We can understand the causes of Jewish backwardness in this respect, and we can readily imagine the motivation of the other nations. "Everyone for himself" seems to be the universal maxim in the

promotion of folklore; and while the Gypsies have their patrons, largely British investigators, the Jews have been thrown on their own resources; and they have not been too industrious on their own behalf. Moses Gaster, one of the foremost students in this domain has done perhaps more for Rumanian culture than for Jewish, although he has also been a leading contributor to Jewish lore. Ignatz Bernstein, similarly, might be considered the top ranking paroemiologist of his generation. Certainly he did not neglect the study of Yiddish proverbs, but his remarkable and almost exhaustive bibliography of the world's proverbs has meant more to him. Our American Jewish folklorists have found it more expedient and lucrative to deal with American, or more specifically New England, folklore than to delve in their own ancestral mines.

The economics of immigration problems of the Jews have had their Gentile researchers, for men like Werner Sombart made it their business to tell the world that Jews were the founders of capitalism; and if Jewish folklore were to reveal some of the more sordid recesses of the Jewish mind, we could rest assured that, as the Nazi professors, indeed, attempted to do, every nook and cranny would be raked for a speck of dirt. Perhaps I might recall a personal experience. I once received an order for a pamphlet of mine entitled "Psychological Aspects of Jewish Protective Phrases" from no less a public figure than the late Carl Mote, who was then a candidate for the United States Senate. At the time I did not know that Mote, whose name and personality remind us of a fine New Testament characterization, was being groomed for the Presidency of the United States by the fascistic elements in the country. Only later did it dawn upon me that what led Mote to send for the booklet was a belief that in it he would learn how the Jews seek to protect themselves by certain phrases. That is the kind of

Jewish folklore which interests the non-liberal "goy;" and I daresay that many of our "hush-hush" Jews would be frightened of any concerted Jewish folklore endeavors lest some finding prove detrimental to the Jewish cause i. e., actually their own personal welfare.

#### *Progress of Folklore Among the Jews*

I am, of course, not unmindful of the attempts made in the past by Jewish literati and composers to initiate a Jewish folklore movement. In 1898, there was inaugurated, in Berlin, the Gesellschaft für jüdische Volkskunde, whose initiator was M. Grunwald. Its journal, *Mitteilungen zur jüdischen Volkskunde*, after undergoing several changes in title, ceased publication in 1929. In St. Petersburg S. Ginzburg and P. Marek brought out, in 1901, the first collection of Yiddish folk-songs, and in the same city, about four decades ago, there flourished a Society for Jewish Folk Music, with men like Engel, Lvov, Sklar, Saminsky, Achron, Rosowsky, Kopit, Milner, and others, actually recreating the musical past of the East European Jew.

In 1919, after organizing an ethnographic expedition in Russia, the famed author of the *Dibbek*, S. Ansky, founded, in Warsaw, the Jewish historio-ethnographic society, and became not only its patron but the initiator of similar societies in various centres. The martyred Noah Prylucki was a pillar of Jewish folklore and linguistics. Singlehandedly, he founded and conducted a Yiddish journal devoted to these topics, besides bringing out several collections of variegated material; and the service of S. Lejman, who explored the Warsaw underworld at great sacrifice in order to collect items which otherwise would have been lost, cannot be too highly estimated. This human monument of folklore died in poverty after spending his means on his hobby and most of his notes were actually lost or undecipherable. In this

country, J. L. Cahan pursued a folkloristic hobby, after publishing his pioneer two volumes on the Yiddish folk-song. That Morris Loeb, scion of the firm Kuhn, Loeb & Co. and a brother-in-law of Jacob Schiff and brother of James Loeb, founder of the Loeb Classical library made a serious effort to institute research in this field is not generally known. In 1921, a Jewish ethnographic society was founded in New York, but it seems to have had practically no existence.

In USSR, with the elevation of Yiddish culture to academic standing, Jewish folklore has fared much better than elsewhere, but even here the output was meagre in comparison with the material extant; for I doubt very much whether there is any Western nationality which offers such rich ores as do the Jews since Biblical times. To date, there is only one compendious volume on Jewish folklore (in English), and a journal, *Edoth* (in Hebrew) published in Jerusalem. *Reshumot* is also largely devoted to the general field of folklore. Angelo Rappoport, the author of the *Folklore of the Jews* deserves more recognition than he has been accorded. As a young man, he brought out a brief history of philosophy which I once found in William James's library. He has published a good deal in a scholarly vein, but few are aware that he has translated a number of Peretz's stories into English, and also Mendele's *Fishke der Kroomer*—and we must remember that it takes a pioneer to do all that in *England*. Rappoport, himself neglected, has been busying himself with presenting the gems of Jewish lore, and had he the support which his projects merit, he might have made more of a showing, even as a compiler. Among the most productive Jewish folklorists at present is Rabbi J. L. Zlotnik, the Director of the Jewish Board of Education in South Africa. Naturally many have published books on the legends of the Jews, principally Louis Ginzberg, whose

six volumes comprise a vast amount of learning but I do not regard these authors as primarily folklorists.

#### *Vastness of Field*

The extent of Jewish folklore is dazzling. The Bible, in itself, feeds the Talmud and Midrashim so that the legends and myths which the latter contain are part and parcel of the vast ocean of Jewish folklore. In Yiddish a twelve-volume anthology of such tales is in process of publication. Let us consider the rituals and ceremonies, the demonology of the Jews (Ashmedai, Samaël or Angel of Death, Lilith, the hordes of mekhabolim, mazikim and sheydim), the more recent tales of the leytsim, the rukhes, the lantukh (various sorts of imps, spirits, goblins, etc.); the beliefs and superstitions centering around birth, courtship, marriage, and death. Then we must add the lore on amulets and talismans (*kameyes*), the cabbalistic incantations, and wondrous tales of Cabbalists, miracle rabbis, and their *obiter dicta*, the traditions of festivals, fasts, and days of glee, the views on disease, the evil eye, the "remedies" such as are found in old psalters, the legends connected with Elijah, the *lamed vov* (36 saints who, unknown to the world justify its existence), the folkways of the Jews in everyday life. The folklore which has grown out of the concentration camps, ghettos, and gas chambers during the brown plague would fill volumes. It is now being sedulously collected by the survivors in Germany and Poland.

Finally, we must advert to the many thousands of proverbs, euphemisms, nicknames, protective phrases, folk-songs, and similes, yes even thousands of the idioms, which might be included under folklore. After contributing at least a hundred articles on the topics mentioned in the last sentence, I feel that I have but scratched the surface. As the renowned poet and translator of the Bible into Yiddish, Yehoash, wrote me in 1921, after

reading an article of mine on the Yiddish euphemism, "I hope you will return to the subject. There is a world of material (*"material iz do a velt"*) and it is just beseeching 'Come and take.'"

### *The Grandmother in Jewish Folklore*

We have all been accustomed to regard Yiddish as a poverty-stricken language, without appreciating the fact that it is remarkably rich in idioms, and that its idioms are most expressive, *revealing folk attitudes* which, consequently, lend these locutions a folkloristic coloring. To take one instance: the word "grandmother" denotes a close relative. How many idiomatic phrases are there in English which revolve around that word? Perhaps two or three.

In Yiddish we have almost a dozen, and even though our grandmother or "bobbe" has little to be thankful for, in this respect, she nevertheless does receive some attention in such phrases as "Main bobbes daigge" ("I should worry" might be the equivalent of "my grandmother's worry;") "Es hot main bobbe's tam" i.e., "It has my grandmother's taste," or, freely rendered "It's absolutely flat." Dertsey! dos dain bobben ("Tell it to your grandmother") is simply our "Tell it to the marines." "A teretz far der bobben" is just a lame excuse that only a grandmother would accept, while "A gedule der bobben" (literally "A joy for granny") is the usual wet-blanket phrase for an enthusiast's claim, and there is also the quaint phrase "derleygn der bobbes yerushe" (literally "to have a deficit of grandmother's inheritance") which ironically means "not to have made such a bad thing of a deal."

In our own country, it was *about* the grandmother that the boy who went to a ball game would be telling the regular story, while the Jewish lad would be telling his fib to the grandmother, who naturally would not disbelieve her darling. The famous *bobbe-maisse* is, of course,

not originally derived from the word for "grandmother," but from *Buovo d'Antone*, the romance which was paraphrased into the Yiddish *Bovo-bukh*, but the folk-mind translated the outlandish "Bovo" into the intimate "Bobbe," who might listen to any fantastic tale and then retail it as if it were the most realistic fact. "To see stars" is rendered in Yiddish "Derzen der bobben fun yener velt," e.g., "er hot im gegebn aza frask az er hot derzen der bobben fun yener velt."

A slightly vulgar idiom circulating in this country is "Ven di bobbe volt gehat redder, volt zi geven a street car," ("If grandmother had wheels, she would have been a street car"—the impatient reply to someone who takes refuge in 'ifs'). There are, furthermore, several proverbs centering around the "bobbe," which may be looked up in Bernstein's *Yiddishe Shprikhverter*, and we must not forget that "Bobbe" or "Bobbl" is a name given to a baby girl so as to protect her against disease and death, which presumably had taken other children in the family. *Bobbe* is also used as a synonym for midwife.

I have not exhausted the list of Yiddish expressions in which "bobbe" figures, but it is surely sufficient to prove that the folk attitude dominates the Yiddish language; and we can confirm this fact by citing similar phrases with *tatte*, as the keyword exceeding those found in other languages associated with "father."

### *The Place of Humor*

Humor, until recently, has scarcely had a place in the economy of folklore, but we are beginning to see that like art, it stems from national reservoirs, and, therefore, possesses specific characteristics; but not all joke books belong in that category. There is humor and humor. To the Jew whose highest conception of religion, because it is usually the last link with his Jewish ancestry, is saying the *Kaddish*—to such a Jew, the only service that Yiddish can offer is the repetition of a joke



with a Yiddish accent and intonation. That is the alpha and omega of Yiddish literature for such Jews. It is as if the only things we should smack our lips over in the French cuisine were the demitasse, or say, a mustard pickle.

A joke about the Jews is no more folklore than a lampoon is literature. Humorous stories, however, created by, and circulating among, Jews do come under that head. Such are the Hebrew collections by A. Druyanov (*Seyfer Haddikhah Vehakhidud*), J. Ravnitzky (*Yiddishe Vitzn*), and E. Olschwanger (*Royte Pom-erantz*). Rabbi S. Felix Mendelsohn has added in English three collections of Jewish Stories, viz., *The Jew Laughs*, *Let Laughter Ring*, and most recently *Here's a Good One*.<sup>\*</sup> It is the last mentioned which occasions some remarks on the criterion of Jewish humor, not its quale, which would require reams, but simply the answer to the question: When can a joke be included in a collection of Jewish jokes?

We have all heard the definition, attributed to Israel Zangwill, that a Jewish joke is one that a Gentile will never understand and a Jew has already heard. It is a priceless diagnosis of the elusiveness of even a Jewish joke, in keeping with other anomalies of Jewish existence, but, of course, like nearly all paradoxes, the observation is extremely exaggerated. Gentiles who are intelligent enough can understand a good Yiddish story, if not based on linguistic or ritual circumstances. And although most jokes are as old as the hills, there are always some new ones being created which we could not all have heard. It would be, I think, perhaps more apt to say that a Jewish joke is one which years later finds its way into the non-Jewish comic strips, the radio, and onto the vaudeville stage.

<sup>\*</sup>*Here's A Good One*, by S. Felix Mendelsohn. Bloch Publishing Company. \$3.00.

### What Is a Jewish Story?

A Jewish joke is not necessarily a story related by a Jew or about a Jew. It could just as well refer to Gentiles, but it *must* have a Jewish slant. In other words you cannot just take any old joke, attach Jewish names to the characters, and label it "Jewish humor." *Here's a Good One*, for the most part, provides a Jewish setting, and the anecdotes and bon-mots, particularly of noted rabbis and secular celebrities, contain much salt, while some of them must be taken with a grain of salt, because the same stories have been told about non-Jews, so that the same gag turns up with different people who receive the limelight. The intensely nationalistic wit ascribed to L. B. Namier is now an anachronism in face of his recently reported marriage in a Greek Orthodox Church. And why libel a man like the late Henri Bergson, first, by having a young woman tell him that "Your snoring is frightful," and, secondly, by imputing to him, in reply to her affirmation that she heard him "with mine own ears," the flippant wisecrack, "An intelligent person like you ought to know that sensory knowledge is delusory." (Incidentally, Bergson would certainly know the difference between "illusory" and "delusory"). Of course, Bergson would never have been guilty of such a sophomoric repartee. There is nothing Jewish about the story, and we ought to be careful about putting *tsitsis* on a diaper, and making out of it an *arba-kanfes*, which leads me to deliver myself of a few subjective reactions on the sense of humor, that may not be devoid of some objective bearing.

### Some Objections

First, I am not in sympathy with the title of the book. *Here's a Good One* may be a catch-title like "Try and Stop Me," but why associate humor with the *noodnick* who buttonholes you and throws at you all the chestnuts which even our



grandfathers found stale? Humor has a dignity of its own, particularly when it aspires to be classed with folklore; and titles are no laughing matter.

Secondly, jokes should not be far-fetched nor long drawn-out; and anecdotes should be authentic. If they are apocryphal, they could still be in character, but if something we had heard linked with some specific figure makes the rounds with an assortment of prominent men, we begin to feel cheated. Rabbi Mendelsohn did well to supply harmless, although plausible, surnames in all the stories, instead of just referring to X or N or Shmerl, but the fastening of a general anecdote to a Jewish sleeve is hardly permissible. Take the one in which Samuel is supposed to have said to the captain of a vessel "Perhaps you don't know that you are talking to the greatest Anglo-Jewish writer of our day," and the latter replies: "That makes no difference, You will have to get off, Mr. Golding." The original version carried the names of O'Neill and G. B. Shaw. Then someone trimmed it so as to fit Bialik and Schneour, which could be an apt substitute-pair, but when this, by now, hackneyed story is attached to one writer after another, the stigma of conceit promiscuously goes with it—and that is an injustice. There must be a code in retailing anecdotes too.

I dislike jokes about what happens before the Gate of St. Peter, or in Paradise or, for that matter, in the inferno. They are almost invariably vapid and insipid. If a joke is not good when related to our realistic world, then it is a decided bore, if applied to the after-world. There is perhaps one exception—with reference to Stephen Wise—that I recall having seen somewhere. It relates of the Jewish leader's going to his reward, and the angels according him honors, and after some discussion of his office and rank, it is decided to offer him the Vice-Presidency of Paradise, but that offends the new

arrival. He wants nothing short of the Presidency, which he contests with God Almighty.

#### *Requirements of an Anthology*

In the compilation of an anthology, one must sift and include only the best, rather than accept all that comes to the mill. The motto should be *non multa sed multum*. Certain jokes are classics because they contain a miniature philosophy. They are perennially fresh because they reflect the eternal contradictions and ironies of our time and the foibles of man. How much wit there is in the *réplique* of Israel Zangwill who, when told by a bishop that the Jews would be spared all their suffering if they became Christians, retorted "But there is a simpler solution to the problem. Let Christians become Christians, and forthwith all our troubles would disappear." It is a capital repartee because there is so much truth in it, and it is so simple that no one but a Zangwill might have thought of it at the moment.

In contrast with this, let me cite another item of the book:

*Bookkeeper:* Good morning, Mr. Goldstein, you look terribly disturbed today. Anything wrong?

*Goldstein:* My brother's awfully sick.

*Bookkeeper:* Oh, is he?

*Goldstein:* No, Bernie.

or when Mrs. Kinsley is told by a new acquaintance that she is just crazy about Kipling, "Aren't you?" And replies "But I must admit, I never learned to kipple." That is as much Jewish humor as a country club is a Jewish institution, or a ham sandwich a Jewish delicacy. There are quite a few *shatnez* jokes of this type. The rubric is called by the compiler "Melting Pot." They might have come under the head of pot boilers. The book would have been distinctly improved if they were missing. There is nothing so puny as a punk pun, and to take such

over from some filler in a local newspaper, after introducing a Jewish name, is not in keeping with the designation of the book, "Stories of Jewish Wit and Wisdom." There are so many good specimens of Jewish humor that we can ill afford to dilute the genuine. True, minister and rabbi are becoming interchangeable terms, and services sound alike in church and temple, yet the *mutatis mutandis* mode in telling a story is to be discouraged.

There is a section in the book called "The Daughter." It is, I suppose, a cryptic reference to Christianity, but on page 38, I find a joke which has nothing to do with the subject. The label "Cataclysm" for the section beginning on page 19 is even more puzzling; for I see no connection whatever. Has this irrelevant method of naming been taken over from filmdom?

Rabbi Mendelsohn has done well to include a section on the jokes that have cropped up in connection with the Nazis, although many of them are not of Jewish origin. But why label that portion "Hitleria"? Did he mean "Hitleriana"? That would be honoring the vilest creature that ever existed. If, as I understand, he wanted to have the name associated with "cholera," then the second *i* should have been omitted, and a note to the effect inserted; for to few would such an association occur without being told. It seems to me that some more appropriate label could have been thought of, like "Hitlerdoo" or "The Brown Plague" or

"Hitleriasis," but "Hitleria" may possibly stand for the *realm of Hitler*, e.g. Utopia. However, it would be best to mention the name as little as possible. Even the jokes about him do him honor, especially where they are not of a Jewish cast, and some are about the Nazis in general.

I have been more critical perhaps than I had intended, but that is only because the compilation is worth while as a whole. Jokes are generally regarded as of no literary value. Even the most ignorant tell jokes, yet it takes brains to systematize them, to provide suitable captions, to translate them, and Rabbi Mendelsohn has done a particularly good job in the translation from the Yiddish, although in many instances, he has polished up the diction to the extent that a fishwife talks like a lady-in-waiting, and an illiterate villager expresses himself as well as a learned rabbi.

Let us hope that when the compiler brings out his fourth collection, he will take heed of at least some of the suggestions I made in this review. A slender volume of hand-picked stories is worth more than a bulky volume of indifferent wisecracks, amusing only the average adolescent mind. Humor is not like music where a few dissonances enhance the meaning of a symphony or concerto. It is more often to be compared with apples of which a few rotten ones will spoil the whole barrel, and Rabbi Mendelsohn's collection is too good an offering to run such a risk.

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*Just as the Jew considers the treatment of Jews in other lands as the measure of the liberal spirit, so must the treatment of the Negro and other minorities be the barometer of democracy in America.*

RABBI J. X. COHEN, quoted in *Negro Digest*, February, 1944

# Freedom

By ALFRED J. HOTZ

♦♦ **F**REEDOM," that magic word that has enslaved so many peoples, is once more playing a significant role in world affairs. It remains a curious commentary on modern civilization that a word, an idea, like "freedom," can mean so many different things to different peoples. Today, for instance, Americans refer to "free peoples" as meaning only those peoples who accept our particular brand of democracy and freedom. Contrariwise, the Russians maintain that freedom and democracy, as they know it, can be had only within the framework of the Soviet system.

The term "freedom" then becomes something fixed and definite in the minds of the followers of the two opposing ideological camps; it enslaves the believers. In addition, non-believers, or those not strictly adhering to the absolutist definition of freedom, are today being forced to choose between either the American or the Russian concept. In the name of freedom, both orthodox believers and non-believers are, then, virtually enslaved. The present concerted drive being made in both official and unofficial American circles to enshrine "freedom," as the glowing symbol for the salvation of world civilization, contains within it certain elements of danger. The danger lies not so much in the symbol itself, but in the emotional and pathological connotation attached to it. Americans, particularly, have the unhappy faculty for moralizing political concepts.

Idealism in world politics invariably presents a distressing dilemma. The ideal is usually pitched on such a high level that the attainable reality appears to be a strange contradiction. Disappointment

and disillusionment result, with a subsequent reaction against any more ideals. One has only to recall the example of the "Four Freedoms." These noble ideals and aspirations were enunciated by President Roosevelt in his message to Congress in January, 1941. Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear are indeed worthy aims to stir the hearts and minds of men. A quick look around the shattered and divided world of today reveals all too clearly the extent to which the "Four Freedoms" have been neglected, forgotten, and violated. Many point to this unhappy fact with sad reflections that the world isn't as it should be. Others turn away in disgust and disillusionment, and blame evil politicians for the existing chaotic conditions. Both skeptics and idealists thus meet on common ground.

Misunderstanding about the nature and purpose of the "Four Freedoms" has contributed much to this tragic state of affairs. In the first place, it must be recalled that President Roosevelt's announcement of these ideals was merely an expression of a political philosophy. It was not meant as a definitive statement of political action. Mr. Roosevelt's pronouncement was couched in general terms as ultimate aims and objectives and not as an immediate program.

Second, the enunciation of the "Four Freedoms" was purposefully designed to prepare American public opinion for the inevitable participation in the global war. Roosevelt knew that our national self-interest demanded the entrance of the United States against the Fascist Alliance. But he also knew that Americans do not

accept war lightly; that, in other words, our aims would have to be lifted into idealistic terms. This is not to say that the President tricked the people into accepting the unhappy alternative of war in preference to a policy of peace. By 1941, the choice was no longer war or peace; instead, the choice was, and could only be, war or war. Noble aims, such as the "Four Freedoms," gave to the Americans the strong moral base that made acceptance of the inevitability of war something more than an issue of mere survival.

A third factor to keep in mind with regard to the "Four Freedoms" is that they were offered as *possible* aims, not mandatory objectives. Although the words "freedom of speech" appear to be in the form of "absolutes," it should be recognized that, measured on the basis of political reality, they can only be in terms of "relatives." Standards and value judgments vary considerably in different parts of the world; in other words, each measurement is in relation to different criteria. That is to say, "freedom of speech" for Americans as practiced in the United States contrasts sharply with freedom of speech for the Russians as practiced in the Soviet Union. Divergent definitions as to what constitutes "freedom of worship" in Russian life as opposed to American life are too obvious to require elaboration.

What is important to remember, however, is the fact that something like the "Four Freedoms" were necessary then, and are necessary now, as ultimate goals for all nations. Idealism in world politics is vital and important, but only if mixed

with a sense of realism as to what *can* be achieved within reasonable limits. The Four Freedoms, though temporarily sidetracked, will never be completely forgotten. In essence, freedom of speech, of worship, freedom from want, from fear constitute the desirable and ultimate ends for all peoples of the world.

As a matter of practical reality, it is the non-realization of "freedom from fear" that presents the gravest problem of our universe today. We fear the Russians and they fear us. Until this feeling of mutual suspicion, distrust, and hate is eradicated, there can be no real freedom from want, or freedom of speech and of worship. It is axiomatic that no real and lasting progress can be made in civil liberties or economic opportunities when the international climate is charged with fear of war. Fear, then, is the major enemy to the better world.

Paradoxically, the main difficulty today seems to be that both Russia and America are fearful that they will not be free to impose their concept of freedom on the rest of the world. Since they are at variance as to the definition of freedom, the present impasse emerges—an impasse that is gradually, and even relentlessly, mounting into a struggle for power to see which ideology of freedom shall prevail. It would be well for American leadership to keep its crusade for "freedom" on a relatively flexible basis, thereby attracting to our cause those who are truly free, free even to differ from the American interpretation of freedom. Above all we should be forewarned that ideals, though perhaps sincerely meant and put forward, are unattainable in practical political action.

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*One thing is plain: Persecution cannot destroy us. It can only bring out the worst in us—and in you.*

LEWIS BROWNE, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Spring, 1939



# *The Navaho's Tragedy*

By RUTH FALKENBURG KIRK

**T**O GLIMPSE the Navaho of the future, it is necessary to look first at him today, and as he was yesterday. Because tomorrow is in the building now.

It is a beautiful land where these Indians live, with juniper, pinon, and sage growing green against red earth, with terraced mesas and blue, blue skies. But it is a hard, a lonely land. One may ride for miles without seeing a sign of people, never guessing that overpopulation is the basic cause behind the human misery so lately publicized by our press and radio.

The population and the misery is there. Huddled behind hills, between clusters of pinon trees, or melting inconspicuously into the earth of which they are made, are more than 12,000 Navaho hogans, in which live more than 60,000 of America's poorest people. The hogans are octagonal one-room huts of mud and logs, picturesque to the eye, unromantic as a human habitation. A Navaho family cooks, eats, sleeps, and lives on the cold dirt floor. There are no windows, no privacy, no sanitation, no comforts. If tuberculosis were evenly distributed, there would be one case in every second hogan and other diseases are equally rampant.

Water is scarce and precious. The nearest well may be three to thirty miles away and, in some households, a man may spend a couple of days each week just to haul water for family and stock use. This interferes with his employment opportunities, though he probably could not get a job anyway because only one Navaho in ten can speak English. Nor is there much chance his children will fare better, as there are school facilities for

less than one child in four. This means 16,000 boys and girls are growing up without any education at all.

Our Navaho usually must depend on the land and on his sheep for a livelihood. His per capita income averages less than \$100 a year, including value of home grown products. His land is almost worthless, and for farming he depends on about a half acre which produces perhaps enough scrubby corn to take the edge off his appetite for a few weeks each Fall. And he probably owns a motley band of sheep, usually about 50. It requires 250 head for a minimum family subsistence, but only 161 families have more than 200 head. More than 5,000 families are without any sheep at all. Each year increasing numbers of Navaho families eat themselves out of the stock business and the entire tribe gets poorer all the time.

These Indians have always been proud, independent, aloof. Perhaps less than any other tribe have they objected to segregation. In earlier days they were economically and socially self sufficient. They preserved their native religion, native customs, and native speech. Traders and missionaries who went among them were obliged to learn the Navaho language and bow to Navaho ways. The Indians were highly selective in what they took from white man's civilization and in those days they did not pick the worst elements. They liked canned foods, coffee, white flour, calico, and velveteens. Saddles, wagons, and later automobiles were accepted. Furniture was useless in a tiny hogan, but sewing machines came into favor as the women continued to wear



the wide skirted Civil War fashions they had acquired during their captivity.

The captivity rankled, and still does—those four long years of misery and homesickness after Uncle Sam's soldiers in 1863 had marched the tribe across New Mexico and kept the Indians in confinement to break their warlike spirit. Many new things came to them in addition to the flowing flounced skirts. For one thing, they learned to sell their weaving, that army men liked Navaho rugs. Hence an art was perpetuated which otherwise might have died, because factory blankets were more comfortable to wear and never since have Navahos worn blankets of their own make. The weaving of rugs has helped support families where there were flocks; poorer women, without sheep, have no wool for weaving.

The government issued sheep when the captives were released. Not as many head by far as had been destroyed by our soldiers in the wars against the tribe, but enough for a new start. And a treaty was signed, a very fine treaty in which the Navahos promised to be good and the United States Government promised farmland and seed, and promised a school with a teacher for every 30 children who could be induced or compelled to attend. The Senate confirmed the treaty and President Johnson signed it in 1868. The Indians faithfully kept their part of the promises.

In 1868 there were 8,000 Navahos, with 34,000 head of sheep and goats roaming over land on which the grass was knee-deep. By 1920 there were 40,000 people. Their flocks had increased—not enough to keep up with the economic needs of the tribe, but too much for the well-being of the land. While one division of the Indian Office employed engineers to worry about soil conservation, another division still insisted that Indians must keep all their ewe lambs to increase their flocks.

The children were the herders. Mothers wove rugs and took full responsibility for

home, children, sheep, and work. The Navahos are matriarchal. Father took care of the religious life, the "sings" and sand paintings and ceremonial dances which have so intrigued students and visitors. Father had a pretty good time of it. This becomes important for tomorrow, because how will he face a future dominated by wagework and hours?

There were a million and a half sheep units by 1933, with about 50,000 tribesmen. Through accelerated erosion, the topsoil was pouring into the San Juan River and into the Little Colorado, thence into Lake Meade where it spelled the ruin of Boulder Dam. So either to save the reservation or to save Boulder Dam, the government killed Navaho livestock. Thousands of horses and goats went first, then sheep. Only a half million sheep units remain today, about the estimated grazing capacity of the range.

At the same time, new lands were sought for the tribe, without avail. A dreamer built schools—49 day schools in a land of vast distances and few roads. Busses were not practical. Poor, hungry, ragged children could not walk dozens of miles daily, so schools were left half empty, many of them closed for lack of students, lack of teachers, lack of funds.

It was not until the Indian parents themselves built crude dormitory facilities so their children could live at the school site, that attendance figures went up to a satisfactory level. There still is insufficient money to feed the children three meals a day and for many other dire necessities. Boarding schools which had been built at the turn of the century and which are bulging with eager students, are falling down for lack of maintenance money.

As the stock were killed, work relief was made available for the Navahos, to build some roads, bridges, small dams, and to do soil conservation and erosion control. But the work came and went, and soon many of the accomplishments

had gone too. Indians who had been enthusiastic and hopeful lost their optimism. Even by the late 30's the future loomed starkly tragic. Thousands of Navahos were on relief, other thousands should have been. There was little income, little work, little possibility.

Then came Pearl Harbor. Under an act of 1924, Navahos had been proclaimed citizens. It was an empty honor, not carrying a right to vote, but now Navahos could be drafted. Hundreds volunteered. The record of Navaho boys and girls in World War II is one of glory—desert fighters and rescue squads in Africa—signal corps Navaho Marines using their fantastic native language to befuddle the Japs. They conveyed 800 military messages quickly, accurately and in complete security, to cover the landings at Iwo Jimo. There are hundreds of other heroic tales. Illiteracy barred many Navahos from war service, but literacy standards were cut to the quick for their benefit. Even so, a study covering several thousand draftees in Arizona showed that only one Navaho man in four could pass the requirements. One in each 11 was rejected because of tuberculosis; 10 percent had serious eye impairment and 12 percent suffered disqualifying ear defects. All in all, 3400 went to war and another 15,000 Navahos left reservation to work on the railroads, in the fields, in the mines. It became a practice to hire 19 men who could not speak English, then the 20th had to know our language and be the interpreter for the group.

The Indians were good workers but not very steady on the job. Men went off to work, leaving their families behind, then averaged about 60 days away before the urge to return home overpowered them. One railroad kept 5000 men on its payroll in order to have 2500 on the job. One can only guess to what degree years of malnutrition and privation may have been responsible for their inconstancy.

In off reservation employment, the

Indians picked up new knowledge, new ideas, new desires—not all of which were good. There has never been more drinking nor so much venereal disease on the reservation as in this postwar period. There is unrest, disappointment, frustration, demoralization.

Even during the war prosperity, the needy aged of the tribe, and the handicapped or orphaned suffered because only the able-bodied could work or fight. Indians in New Mexico and Arizona do not receive public assistance from state welfare departments as other people do. Relief benefits from the Indian Office have been paltry, usually a budget of \$50,000 a year for 60,000 people. Most of the time only one social worker has been available. Navahos have no public health services, no public health education, no school nurses, only half enough hospital facilities, and no field medical care.

There are very few roads, so when medical care becomes available, roads will be a prerequisite. Out of 4,000 miles of highways and trails over the 16,000,000 acre reservation, only 150 miles have any gravel topping and the federal government has never paved one mile. There are some hard surfaced roads on the periphery, which have been built by the states.

The population of the tribe continues to grow. This in spite of an appalling infant mortality. One baby in three dies before the age of one year and 57 percent of all deaths occur in children below the age of six years. An analysis of 603 children born in 1939 shows that 310 were dead by 1944, 115 from starvation or inanition.

Nature apparently is trying to compensate by an astounding increase in prolificness. Navaho birth rate is estimated to be 37.6 per 1000 annually, as compared with a national average of 19.5 per 1000, so there are about 1100 more Navahos each year. All figures are estimates based on piecemeal studies but are more than

borne out by statistics compiled from OPA ration book issues.

There are no complete vital statistics on the Navaho. The government has been much more zealous in counting the number of sheep and goats than in keeping track of the people. Many of us feel that there has been indifference in the Office of Indian Affairs to human aspects of the Navaho situation, perhaps stemming from a preoccupation with land resources. It may be correct that land should be a major concern of the Department of the Interior, but it is long past time that the Navaho Indians as people should receive necessary consideration.

Since the reorganization of the federal government, all major health, education and welfare activities of the nation have been centered under the aegis of the Federal Security Agency. It should appear logical that the Indians might fare much better if the Indian Office also were transferred to that agency.

In examining causes behind the Navaho fiasco, one is struck by the persistence of a basic policy in government that Indian economy must be land based. The Indians were caught in a cultural lag three centuries ago when their continent was invaded and conquered. Then they tried to preserve their natural woods life, hunting and fishing, but were crowded out by agriculturists. Now that an industrial era is upon us, it is just as archaic to expect Indians to remain on reservations with uneconomic agriculture and stock raising as their resource base. Industry is alleged to be the way of prosperity for other underlanded, overpopulated nations; why not for Indians?

Nor is it feasible to look upon Indian tribes as "sovereign dependent nations" centering their activities around ineffectual, powerless tribal governments under total control of the Indian Office; and trying to build reservations up as self sufficient units, as the Indian Reorganization Act inclines to do. The Indian must

be as much a part of today's One World as other Americans, and Indian Office heads must honestly face their responsibility of encouraging the assimilation of Indians more quickly into our national life. The Navaho tribe did not accept the Reorganization Act, but to all intents and purposes the same policies have been applied to them.

Another philosophy of the Indian Office which may come in for criticism is the apparent effort on the Navaho Reservation to keep the native culture alive and intact. Anthropologists have had a field day dissecting and examining this aboriginal pattern of living, and there seems some justification for belief that education has deliberately been withheld from the tribe. There is nothing in the record to show where requests have ever been made for enough schools for the children, or for the other social services which the Navahos lack.

Expenditures by the Indian Office on this reservation for many, many years back have averaged only about one half as much as has been spent on Indians of other tribes. In 1940 the national average per capita expenditure of the Indian Office was \$126 per Indian—for Navahos it was just \$64, although they were much more in need than any other tribe. Even the proposed budget for education next year continues this discrimination. Large sums have been spent on Indians in other states who were much better off than the Navahos.

Undoubtedly there must be changes in the policies and conduct of the Indian Office. It is my belief that a complete reorganization and re-evaluation is required. In this connection, a student of government would find it most interesting to examine the concepts upon which the Indian Service has been built. It grew up from a military establishment and has developed into an autocratic system of governing Indians which is quite at variance with our modern principles of de-

mocracy and self-government. Reform in the Indian Service would go far to help all Indians find their places in democratic society and to assure their success in the world of tomorrow.

As long as the Navahos had enough sheep and used their children as herders, there was little demand from them for schools. But now the children are idle and hungry. Also the Navaho people learned during their war travels how well the rest of America lives. They like our standards and aspire to them. They have come to look on education as the gateway to better living, as a panacea for all their ills. Even though education will not do all that they hope, schools and jobs are vital necessities and must be number one items on any program of rehabilitation.

Even with full development of all reservation resources, only about half the tribe can hope to find even minimum subsistence on the land. The others must be industrialized or dispersed, and either method presents huge, difficult problems.

Industrialization of course involves not only the question of responsibility of Navaho men to stay on a job, but other problems such as the types of goods to be produced, the management, capital, markets and competition. The answers are not in sight. There is so little water on the reservation, and reportedly so little water potential, that this factor alone will limit industrial opportunity in many areas.

Dispersal poses even more difficult problems. Colonization of large groups appears the most promising. For example, the prospect appears good for success in moving about a thousand families to the Colorado River Reservation where other tribes already have extensive land and water rights, which may be shared by the Navahos. There are excellent irrigation possibilities on the San Juan River at Shiprock, where Navahos could use more than 100,000 acres of their own reservation land. This development will be expensive. And even these two large

projects do not provide a sufficient outlet for the surplus population.

It has been suggested that families or small groups should be placed on land in each new irrigation project to be developed throughout the nation, as a step toward self sufficiency and assimilation. If Indians are sent out in groups which are too small for satisfactory social life, they will simply leave and return to their reservation homes. If they are given title to land, they likely would sell it. And if trusted lands are turned over to them, it would imply a myriad new reservations. Navahos do not know how to farm, and extension workers or other experts would face an insurmountable language barrier in trying to teach them.

It would seem obvious that before Navahos can be expected to assimilate into the general population, they must be brought up to the standards of that population—educationally, economically, and otherwise.

As long as opportunities are open for laborers on the railroads, in mining and in agriculture, there will be considerable off reservation employment. Men are steadier and happier in these jobs when they can have their families with them. But here lurks a whole new set of difficulties. Housing for migrant farm workers and on other jobs is usually inhumanly substandard. The people arrive under a handicap because they cannot speak the language. Children have never seen a water faucet or a toilet. And they do not see any in these new homes, because families often live without running water, without sanitary facilities. What chance do such children have?

They are sick, filthy, vermin ridden. They must play in areas fouled by their own defecations, whence unbathed they may try to enter a public school. It is inevitable that they will be rejected, or discouraged into withdrawal.

This is all the more pitiable because Navaho children are charming and intelli-



gent. Tests made by the University of Chicago indicate their I. Q. is higher than that of average American children, and on a par with that of children from well-to-do suburban areas of our nation. Teachers who have had Navaho boys and girls under favorable conditions are delighted with their aptitude and progress.

If measures are not undertaken by employers, civic groups, and others to lend a hand to Indians who are forced into dismal, impossible surroundings, to help them into acceptable social conditions and into satisfactory relationships with people around them, of course Indians are predoomed to land on the dumpheaps and in the slums. This is not only an inexcusable loss of human resources, but it is not financial economy to force Indians off reservations into squalor and rejection, their only future that of relief recipients, providing they can get on relief.

It is probable that these primitive, illiterate First Americans have a much more difficult adjustment to make than do newcomers to our shores, even those who come without our language. Because usually immigrants are literate in their own tongue, and share a common background of European origin and culture with the people of our land. These advantages are not shared by Indians.

Navahos do not come empty handed into our civilization. They are fine people, well worth saving. They are likeable, handsome, proud, calm, dignified. They have a superb sense of humor. Mechanically they are very adept. Their artistic talent is breathtaking—not only in the beauty of their textile design, but in the realm of silversmithing and other handicrafts, as well as in painting, poetry, and

fine arts. Everyone whose home has been made cheery by the brightness of a Navaho rug—gay and modern as tomorrow—can sense what attributes lie in Navaho hearts. America will be enriched if these people are accepted and encouraged and taken into our lives.

What will their tomorrow be? Education, social acculturation, industrialization, colonization, off reservation employment, economic development of all reservation resources—the right answer involves them all. Each approach might be utilized. Some Navahos will find their future one way, some another. The percentage of failures will be determined largely by how long it is before opportunities are made available for success.

The Congress hopes to make a start in the right direction when a Navaho rehabilitation program is authorized during the present session. Whether the Indian Office will find and offer the best possible recommendations is unknown at this writing. They are trying to do so. But certain it is that the next few years will be critical for the Navahos. The patience and continuing interest of Congress and the American public will be required. It will be expensive.

Failure will mean liquidation of the Navaho people.

So the problem assumes importance out of proportion to its size. What kind of conquerors are we? If we fail the Navahos, can we face the world honestly in our efforts to help downtrodden people of other lands? The sincerity of America is on trial and will be attested by tomorrow's Navahos—by what has happened to these people who today constitute our smallest, but most acute minority problem.

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*"The enemy of the Jew is the enemy of freedom. They who organize the pogrom today will attack tomorrow the general foundations of freedom."*

HAROLD J. LASKI

# The Delicate Shell

By ELIOT L. WAGNER

THE SUNLIGHT, through the dusty windowpanes, lay like a film on her eyelids. Boys were playing ball in the gutter four stories below. Their shouts rapped across the Sunday morning air. No, she thought, half-sleeping, don't listen, don't wake up. Too soon.

But she was helpless now against the noises. From the courtyard came the rising thump of a danceband. Dishes rattled in the kitchen, then—crash! The kids. How many broken this time? More dishes, more money. Money. What? Oh. The three dollars I gave pappa yesterday to buy Teddy shoes. Did he get them? Ask when I get up.

Behind her eyes was an ache of tiredness. The day of rest, the day of rest the rest of day of . . . on . . . the . . . She started, reawakened by a new sound: her father's voice from the bedroom inside.

"Could I get it? Why not? And such a location!"

Uncle Benny's voice said, "How much would it be?"

That meant her father was receiving. Who else is there? Well, of them all, Benny's nicest—the bettor on wrong horses.

Smack! went her father's fist against his palm. "Seven hundred fifty dollars I got a high class fruit stand in a busy market."

Does he believe that? Hattie's spine tingled, and she shivered away a sprinkling of embarrassment for her father. Clutching at straws, okay. But his arrogance! And they come every week and listen. Why? A dream world. To talk about money: hundreds, thousands, tens

of thousands, millions. They come here to dream together.

I'll dream too. Nice thoughts bring sleep. Sid and I are married. We have a three room apartment on Washington Heights. It has a view of the river. The sun is setting; there are lavender clouds over the palisades. We're at the window; there's a warm breeze ruffling the pink curtains. He has his arm around me. . . .

"Ah, go on!" Uncle Morris' hoarse, bass voice exclaimed. "With five thousand capital I could put out all the chocolate syrup you want—and better than Borden's!"

Hattie's dream faded. The noise, which had melted into a monotone, separated now into its component discords: shufflings from the apartment next door, below and overhead; shouts; blaring radios; dishes clinking; Aunt Chava's mannish laughter in the bedroom. Suddenly angered, Hattie raised her head and called, "Why don't you keep quiet in there and let me sleep!"

There was a moment's hush, and then a low drone—whisperings she could not make out. The ingrate daughter. No respect, they always say. Just because with luck she got a civil service job. She goes to college at night to look for boys, so right away she's a member of the intelligentsia.

They never mention that the civil service job doesn't pay enough for anyone to live on. . . . But no fear. Pappa will make excuses: a nervous girl, high strung. Make allowances, he said once. Didn't know I was listening. And mamma. Shuffling around in worn house slippers (don't forget Teddy's shoes). Grey wisps in her

hair, eyes darting, glancing here, there. But easier to stand, revolving quietly in the orbit of her lord and master.

Hattie opened her eyes. Plaster cracks veined the ceiling, and the paint on the wall was peeling. Her ten year old brother Teddy's bed was on one side of the room. Her own, the sway-middled thing, was larger, but she shared it with her sister Yetta, who was fourteen. Between the foot of her bed and the window was a battered sewing machine table, upon which her schoolbooks were stacked. She stared at them, and then screwed her knuckles into her eyes. They teared a little. She yawned.

Getting up, she ruffled the pages of a textbook. Governments and Political Systems of Europe, as of Italy. The Fascist Constitution. Nothing about what they do to you. She snapped shut the book and replaced it on the pile. I'm through. I'm not going there anymore. What they teach you: fascist constitution. Was I crazy? So I'll never be educated. Get some fresh air during lunchtime instead of trying to read in that cafeteria. And evenings free, to be with Sid. I'll tell him tonight.

In the kitchen, the remains of the prolonged Sunday breakfast were everywhere. Her brother and sister sat at either end of the kitchen table, gravely reading comic books. Neither seemed aware of her presence. She moistened her lips, somewhat provoked.

"A very nice job you did with the dishes," she said.

Yetta raised her eyes. They were dark and rebellious. Her rich black hair was dishevelled. She brushed a strand from her forehead.

"What do you think I am, a housemaid?" she snapped.

She gathered the loose folds of her soiled hoover-apron about her. Teddy, pre-occupied, turned toward his older sister.

"Huh? . . ." he said, absently.

To Yetta, Hattie said, "You can at least do your own dishes."

"I'll do them," Yetta replied. "What's my hurry. I'm not expecting any boy friends to call for me."

Hattie regarded her sternly. "What have boy friends got to do with washing the dishes when you're through eating?"

Yetta waved her arm violently. "Go on! I know what's on *your* mind! Sidney's coming! You don't want him to see the dump the way it really is. Huh. If I had a friend, I wouldn't let him come up to this dump."

"If it's a dump, it's because you make it one," Hattie heard herself ineffectually reply.

Yetta went to the sink, picked up a soiled dish, and then turned to her sister. "This smelly rotten dump was a dump before I was ever born and it'll be a dump after I'm dead, and I hope it's soon."

"Yetta! Don't talk that way. I only meant that if you keep yourself clean and dress neatly you won't become what the place is."

Yetta let the sink water spurt full force, and wiped her hand quickly over the dish she was holding.

"Go on!" she replied.

Poor kid. It is a dump. No friends. Ashamed to bring anyone up. She went to the stove, passing behind her sister, and squeezed Yetta's shoulder. Yetta twisted away.

All part of the disharmony. She put a frying pan on the stove to heat, and stood by idly, letting her glance fall to the yellow, grey-gashed linoleum, and thence to Teddy's feet.

"Did you get shoes, Teddy?"

The child raised his birdlike head and gazed at her, a little vague about what she had asked him. He stroked the delicate, white skin of his cheek with two fingers, imprinting two red streaks.

"Shoes?" he asked, dreamily.

Yetta, sneering, said over her shoulder, "Nah. He didn't get any shoes."

The boy flushed. His lips made a voiceless motion or two toward the utterance of excuses he had not wholly made up. Then he said, "Pappa was busy yesterday. He didn't have time to take me."

Hattie, seeing his discomfiture, soothed him, running her fingers through his thick black hair. He stooped again over his comic book, and she went into her parents' bedroom. Her father, in bed, peered over black shell spectacles into a wrinkled copy of *Der Tag*. His face was oval shaped, like an egg, broadening on top, baldish. His jaw, jutting slightly, had the set of power. Her Aunt Chava, a heavy, smooth faced woman of fifty, was talking rapidly in her deep voice to Mrs. Seldman, who sporadically pushed a dust rag over the surface of the bureau. Hattie's mother, a diminutive woman, listened, nodding occasionally.

Uncle Morris was telling a story but Uncle Benny, his arm flung over the chairback, gazed out of the window, not listening. When he saw Hattie, he smiled. "Good morning, darling. Did I wake you up? I'm sorry."

Hattie had to smile, despite herself.

"Pappa," she said.

Mr. Seldman lowered his newspaper slowly, reading a last line, and finally looked at his daughter.

Hattie said, "Pappa, you promised me you'd take Teddy for shoes yesterday."

"I had nothing to do yesterday, only go shopping for Teddy's shoes. Not a single thing!"

Hattie strained to control her temper. "Then give mamma the money and she'll take him tomorrow," she said. Mrs. Seldman raised wrinkled fingers to her mouth and shook her head.

"No!" declared Mr. Seldman. "Don't order me around so much. I'll take him, when I got time!"

Hattie's nostrils arched. She pressed her lips together.

"Hattie," her mother interrupted. "You

ate already? It smells like something burning in the kitchen."

Hattie ran back to the kitchen to find smoke billowing from the overheated frying pan. Hattie turned off the gas and gingerly tossed the scorched pan into the sink. She began again, and prepared two eggs for herself. Then she went to the bedroom, where Yetta was sprawled reading the magazine section of a Sunday paper, and got a volume of Wordsworth that she had bought for a course in school last term. She returned to the kitchen, sat down at the table, and hungrily buttered a slice of bread. She opened her book to a place marked by a scrap of newspaper. *Tintern Abbey*. She started to eat, idly scanning the lines.

Sacrilegious, to read this with eggs. She reached the part that filled her always with a poignant yearning:

The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion: the tall  
rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and  
gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms, were  
then to me  
An appetite; a feeling and a love. . . .

She read a few lines more. Then a radio voice, suddenly amplified, crooned from outside:

Oh take me, where the daisies,  
Cover the country lanes,  
We'll make hay while the sun shines,  
We'll make love when it rains.

She looked up. Teddy frowned over his book; two vertical lines creased the center of his forehead. The grimy curtains; the grey tin window box, glittering in the bright frost; the dirty, brown brick wall opposite. She closed her book.

Tasting the eggs, she found that they were becoming cold. She ate rapidly, with little appetite.

Sundays, formerly, found Mr. Seldman



exhausted by his eighty hour work week. And now, though he had been without work for several months, he still rose late from habit. But by six o'clock he was in the livingroom, presiding over his visitors, of whom there were about a dozen.

Hattie, doing her hair before a mirror in her bedroom, listened to the babble of their voices. She and her mother had spent the afternoon putting the house in order. Now, Mrs. Seldman was inside and Hattie waited for Sid.

She fingered the back of her hair, and scrutinized herself approvingly in the glass. She was attractive, brunette, with blue eyes, and with a face oval like her father's. She turned, starting to brush her dress with her hand, when the doorbell rang. Her face brightened, and she opened the door. A gawky, juvenile form was silhouetted against the faint light from the hall bulb.

"Oh, it's you," said Hattie.

"What's so terrible about that?" the boy asked.

"Nothing. What do you want, Irving?"

"You can tell your mother she won a raffle by Adeth Israel."

"A raffle?"

"Yeh. An electric toaster. Mrs. Jacobsen from the Women's League says she should get it at the meeting tonight."

Hattie thanked the boy, and went to her mother, who stood leaning against the doorway between the livingroom and bedroom, and in a low voice told her the news.

Mr. Seldman raised his arm, and in his pervasive voice, exclaimed, "Just a minute!" The guests looked toward him with interest.

A retort rose to Hattie's lips; but again Mrs. Seldman interceded. A smile widened her sunken mouth and narrowed her eyes as she announced what had happened.

"You see, Benny," she said to her brother-in-law, "you ain't the only one in the family that bets."

Benny in turn smiled, and waved his forefinger. "I see you're right, Gussie," he said. "But I'm still the only one in the family that bets but don't win."

Everybody laughed.

Sid arrived a little later. He squeezed Hattie's hand and went into the livingroom while she put on her hat and coat. He turned to her, grinning.

"None of the crowd noticed me except Uncle Benny and your sister. Benny waved, and Yetta gave me a dirty look."

"Yetta doesn't dislike you. She's angry at you temporarily for coming to see me instead of her."

Sid, a young man of twenty seven, of average height and build though inclined toward plumpness, laughed, his whole face expanding. His hair was dark, and he had heavy eyebrows, a prominent nose, and a wide mouth. "I'm lucky," he said. "She'll be very attractive in three or four years."

Hattie buttoned her coat. "We'll be married by then. She'll be your sister-in-law."

Sid nodded. "I hope so," he said.

"Well, I'm all dressed and ready to go," said Hattie, drawing on her black, imitation-kid gloves.

"Oh," said Sid, "about that. I couldn't get the passes for the Philharmonic."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Hattie. Schelomo, they were having: what we are. The strings, the wailing brass, the lyric cello. "That's too bad."

"However," he said, "all is not lost. We won't have to stand out in the cold. I managed a couple of passes to Loew's."

She made a face. "What's playing there?" "Are We Happy?," and "Who Cares." "Sid!"

He opened the door for her, and they walked downstairs through a narrow stairway and cold hall that reeked of damp plaster and defective plumbing.

"I think they're showing a couple of stinkers," he said. "But there's the privacy there."

"Yes," she agreed. "There's that."

The movies turned out to be as poor as they expected, but they sat patiently, holding, fondling each other in the dark. Occasionally they kissed. When it was over, they went out again into the cold. It was an icy night, and the frost deepened with every moment. Hattie tried to bury her chin in the cheap fur collar that surmounted her coat.

"How about coffee?" asked Sid.

"Anything," Hattie said. "If only we had someplace to go."

"We have," Sid replied. "The cafeteria."

She glanced at him sharply, but, as usual, he was grinning. Good for me. Otherwise I'd get sorry for myself, like the kid.

The cafeteria was warm, but had a peculiar lighting that jaundiced everything: the food in the counter cases was a yellowish brown; the faces of the middle-aged men and women who sat talking leisurely at the tables were like waxen masks. Hattie sat down, and Sid brought coffee and two slices of luminous cheesecake. Hattie put a spoonful of sugar into her coffee, and stirred it.

"The coffee looks green," she said.

"Don't look at it. Drink it," he answered, and gulped a mouthful of his.

"Is that how you keep smiling?" she asked. "By not looking at things?"

"What am I not looking at?"

"At me."

He looked at her over the rim of his cup, swallowed, and then said, "I am looking at you. You're yellow too." He tasted a piece of cheesecake and said, "Not good." Then, seeing the rising anger in her face, he added, "How's your school work coming?"

"It's over. I quit, as of this morning."

He nodded. "Being a bachelor myself—of arts, I mean—and knowing what it is, I agree with GBS that the libraries and museums and concert halls are all the educational facilities we need. I told that

to Miss Rubin, the chief clerk in my office, and she called me a snob. 'Get back to filing your papers, Sidney,' she said. She might have hurt my feelings, talking like that."

"What is the matter with you!" Hattie retorted. "Don't you care about yourself? You hurt *my* feelings, just telling me the story!"

Sid leaned forward, and placed his hand tenderly upon her wrist. "You're a sweet girl. But you're too tense! If you stretch any tighter, the slightest tap'll break you. Don't you see? If you smile, nobody gives a damn, but at the same time nobody gets a chance to laugh at the agony inside you. There's nothing they love better than to see you squirm." He leaned back in his chair, and grinned.

"At least you can have the satisfaction of not giving the world a good time at your expense."

She looked into his face, and shook her head. "No, it's not only that. You don't look like Pagliacci. You just look self-satisfied."

"But I'm not self-satisfied. For one thing, I'm dissatisfied that I don't make a living, because if I did, we could marry."

Hattie sipped her coffee, and for a moment they were silent. She listened to the monotone of talk and laughter. It was harsh, like the lighting and chromium of the cafeteria itself. She saw over Sid's shoulder the fleshy face and greying moustache of a man, some tables away, who was staring at her. He was old enough to have been her father.

"Why can't we marry," she said. "We make enough together to live on."

"If only eleven could live as cheaply as two, I'd ask you to marry me."

"What eleven?"

"Your family, and my family, and . . . us," he explained, smiling.

She toyed with the handle of the thick, pale coffee-mug. "Well what are we going to do?"

"I don't know," he said. The smile faded from his face; but she, preoccupied with the sinking of her heart, did not notice.

They kissed goodnight and parted outside her apartment. When she went in, a strong, pleasant odor of toasting bread was wafted to her nostrils. Without entering the bedroom, she threw her things to Teddy's bed and hurried to the kitchen. Yetta, Teddy and their father were seated at the table. A single bulb on the wall behind Mr. Seldman, lighted the room, over the table, casting a long shadow of his head. In the center of the table shone the chromium toaster Mrs. Seldman had won in the synagogue raffle. Next to the toaster was a plate stacked with slices of toasted bread, and beside that was the butter dish. Teddy and Mr. Seldman were munching toast, holding in their fingers bite-marked pieces of it. Yetta, her chin cupped in her palms, merely watched the mechanism operate. Mrs. Seldman watched, too, standing near the sink.

"Well," said Mr. Seldman. "So how do you like the toaster?"

Hattie found herself irritated by the possessiveness of his voice. She suppressed the feeling and bent forward to examine the machine.

"Ah," she said, "it's a Toastmaster. That's the best, I think. How does it work?"

"Work?" said her father. "It works wonderful! Here, eat a piece." He indicated with a liberal motion of his hand the plate of toast.

Yetta tossed her head. "It ought to work. It cost you three dollars, darling, the three dollars for Teddy's shoes."

Mr. Seldman shrugged. "It ain't worth three dollars, a toaster like this? I could sell it tomorrow for fifteen."

"Do you mean you did use that money?" Hattie asked in a flat voice.

"I did. So what about it?" he replied.

Hattie's head swam, and golden specks danced in front of her eyes. "Can't you

understand that it's my money?" she said. And then, with each word, her voice rose. "Can't you understand what every dollar means to me, what I don't have on account of you? Don't you understand? Don't you? Don't you!"

Mr. Seldman stood up slowly, his face pale. In a voice he hardly could control, he said, "You're saying . . . this . . . to me?"

"Yes, to you!" Hattie cried, "why not to you?" She would have said more had not her mother clutched her arm sharply.

Mr. Seldman turned and walked through the livingroom into the unlighted bedroom, where he sat down next to the window.

In the kitchen, Mrs. Seldman said, "Are you crazy, talking like that to him? Was it his fault all the winners were giving contributions, so we gave two dollars? Was it his fault we had to give another dollar to the caretaker? What makes you talk like that?"

Hattie stared at her mother, confused. "Don't they *know* we're poor, mamma, don't they *know* it?" she said at last.

Mrs. Seldman shrugged. Her voice became calmer. "Who knows what they know? Everybody knows only from their own. You get tired sitting up here, you go down there to sit. You're tired of your trouble, everybody's tired of their trouble. So you make out like you ain't got no trouble. Somebody gives a contribution, so you give a contribution. Pappa is to blame for that?" Again she shrugged, more briefly this time. "Go, Hattie, go. Talk to him, he shouldn't feel so bad."

Hattie hastened to her father's bedroom. She saw his profile silhouetted, his high forehead: the delicate shell containing pride, the facade concealing fear.

"Pappa, I'm sorry. I didn't mean what I said. I was unhappy about something else."

He did not answer.

"Pappa, please. Can I turn the lamp on?"

He said nothing. She switched on the light. Slowly he turned his face toward her.

The shell was crumbling. Tears oozed from the reddened eyeslits. The mouth was a grinning, quivering crack. . . .

Hattie, as she walked slowly to her room, stood outside her composure, wondering at it. She closed the door behind her, knowing it was absurd to do so: the

children had still to come in to go to sleep. She sat on the edge of the bed and stared at the enshadowed wall an arm's length away. From the courtyard came the muffled sound of radios, querulous voices, babies crying.

She listened for a long time, and suddenly she wondered: 'were the noises growing louder, or was it the emptiness inside her that made them seem so?

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## CHANGE

By HAROLD APPLEBAUM

If I had never seen the moon-loved tides  
 Creep closer to the shore, nor found  
 Their most abandoned curves flung highest  
 On the morning sands—If I had never watched  
 The cycling seasons pass in tandem  
 Through the slow chiaroscuro of the year,  
 Nor wondered at the bud, the bloom,  
 The death and slumber of the rose—  
 If I had never trembled, soared, withdrawn  
 With violins, nor known the dread of drums  
 Like thunder in the mind, reiterating fear,  
 Yet giving way at last, again, to music  
 And the warm brass renaissance of love—

If I had never known that all things hold  
 Within themselves their own deep immortality,  
 I would have cried that all things change,  
 That nothing is that does not pay to time  
 Its small dear tribute of mutation, its coin  
 Or crust or grain of change. But I have watched,  
 And I have seen and learned, and now I know  
 That nothing changes—no, not love or music,  
 Not history or planets, tides, the sun or moon.  
 The patterns move, rewind and move again  
 On spindles of assorted time, to prove the paradox  
 That change is transient, yet in all the cosmos  
 Remains the only permanent, the one eternal thing.



# Germany's Demographic War

By ALFRED WERNER

NOT LONG AGO the Chicago *Abendpost*\* came close to charging the Allies with the crime of killing the Germans through privation when that "American newspaper published in the German language" complained about "a peace so harsh, so barbarous, so murderous that you can look in vain for something similar in the history of the world," adding that this was not a hard peace but "carefully considered and carefully planned mass murder." About the same time Pastor Niemoeller, lecturing in the United States, boldly asserted that his compatriots were the victims of a deliberate scheme by the Allies to exterminate the Germans through malnutrition. If this were true, it would be a shocking affair, for no sane person should want to treat the defeated Germans in the same bestial manner as they treated a dozen European countries in the course of five or six years. But it is *not* true; the Germans are not being forced to starve to death, although today they eat less than they did in the years of triumph when they emptied the larders of the greater part of Europe. Writing in *The New York Times* (January 15, 1947) C. L. Sulzberger revealed that the German miners in the British occupation zone received a ration of 4,000 calories a day; compare this to the 400 calories per day which the Germans permitted the Dutch before the end of the war. The same newspaper report reveals that German farmers are withholding food products from the markets and that, although the harvest of

1946 was good, as for example in the Rhineland and in northern Westphalia, only 50 per cent of the grain deliveries expected were actually made.

Had the Germans instead of the Allies been victorious, they undoubtedly would have imposed upon the world what would have amounted to "carefully considered and carefully planned mass murder" to use the *Abendpost's* phrase. In fact, we have ample evidence of a Nazi scheme, going back to the 'twenties, according to which only the "Germanic" people should rule the world, while all "inferior" races should be either demoted to the status of serfs, or exterminated. This infernal scheme began to operate more or less openly in November, 1938, when hundreds of Jews were killed in large-scale pogroms, and it was abandoned only in May, 1945, when the last Nazi death camps were occupied by Allied troops. The Nazis were determined to win the war "So oder so," one way or another: if they should again be defeated on the battlefields, as in 1918, the Allies would win a Pyrrhic victory, for they would have lost the "demographic war," the war of numbers! Come what may, post-war Germany would be quantitatively the strongest and healthiest nation of Europe, surrounded by weak demoralized nations with a high death and a low birth rate; teeming with children, Germany would be able to "try it again" a few years later. A new term had to be invented by Raphael Lemkin, expert in international law, to characterize this Fascist weapon of world conquest—"genocide," which he defined as the purposeful destruction of nations, races, or other groups.

\*From an editorial, "Appeal to Christianity" *Chicago Abendpost*, December 12, 1945.

Did Hitler posthumously win Germany's demographic war? "Yes, he did" declared the International Committee for the Study of European Questions, whose recent report caused a frightening shock to many European and American statesmen and scholars; England's Lord Beveridge and America's William L. Shirer in newspaper articles supported the Committee's opinion. But according to a United States Military Government report Germany lost her war of numbers, and Messrs. Hoyt Price and Carl E. Schorsky, authors of *The Problem of Germany* (1947) assert, with great relief, that for a long time Germany will be too weak and underpopulated to constitute a serious danger to world peace.

"But suppose the Germans remain the strongest nation in the Europe to the west of the Memel-Odessa line, why should this be of any concern to us after the defeat of Hitlerism?" some angry voice may break in at this point. Regrettably, that person's optimism would be unwarranted. Before discussing the question whether or not Germany lost her demographic war, it might be worth while to demonstrate that the crematoria of Auschwitz and the killing of millions of Jews, Poles, Russians and others were only the logical conclusions of a policy that can be traced, not merely to the "Deutschland ueber Alles" and the "Drang nach Osten" of the Germany of Emperor William II, but as far back as the idealistic German philosophers and historians of the 19th century. German megalomania, expressing itself in the desire to Germanize, by every possible means, the rest of the world, probably is not so much a "racial" feature, biologically inherited, as it is a by-product of a very unfortunate and unhappy history. Germany was down-trodden, split into many impotent states, a helpless victim of Napoleonic aggression when the philosopher Fichte, in his *Reden an die Deutsche Nation*, called his people "the consecrated and inspired

ones of a divine work-plan" and told his audience that "to you of all other modern nations the germs of human perfection are especially committed." To Fichte, who loathed the idea of militaristic world empires, Germany's mission was still one of peace and righteousness: "It is yours," the philosopher admonished the German students, "to found an empire of mind and reason and to destroy rude physical power as the ruler of the world."

But in the mind of the historian Treitschke who was stimulated by the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest and the military and political achievements of Bismarck, the scheme lost its original loftiness: "The greatness and goodness of the world," the professor passionately taught his students, "is to be found in the predominance there of a German culture, of the German mind, in a word of the German character." A powerful German world empire was his ambition, and war was the way to bring it about: "War," he avowed, "is both justifiable and moral and . . . the ideal of perpetual peace is not only impossible, but immoral as well." According to Treitschke the other nations were feeble and decadent, and it was Germany's role to hold the sceptre of the nations so as to ensure the peace of the world. From this notion there was only one short step towards Friedrich Lange's brazen statement (in *Deutsche Religion*) that the German people was "the elect of God," while its enemies were "the enemies of the Lord." Small wonder that a megalomaniac like Emperor William II should eagerly pick up this philosophy and regard himself as the anointed of God, the Messiah to carry on the world of his ancestors and to lead the German people to greater glory and power and wealth.

Prussia more than any other German state waged a ruthless demographic war against the minorities within her borders—as if their very presence annoyingly reminded the Herrenvolk that there were

other nations, too, on God's Earth. The story of anti-Semitism in the German Empire is well-known; it must be admitted, though, that Jews converted to Christianity were not being discriminated against. Less generally known are the ruthless wars waged against the other minorities in the Reich: the Danes in Schleswig-Holstein, the French in Alsace-Lorraine, the Poles in the Eastern provinces, and the Wends, a small Slavic tribe in Northern Germany. Many bi-lingual Alsatians resented the arrogance of the Prussians who, having "liberated" them in 1870 from the non-existent French "yoke," treated them like colonials, trying to extirpate their magnificent hybrid culture, which produced the present premier of France, Maurice Schumann, and the eminent German-French writers, Rene Schickele and Albert Schweitzer. The Poles in the Eastern provinces constantly clashed with their German overlords. Even in purely Polish sections the administration, the police, and the law courts were thoroughly Germanized; documents in Polish and the use of Polish in the witness box were permitted only "by the express will of the sovereign," old Polish cities got German names, and Polish recruits were distributed among German regiments. Not only was German made the medium of instruction in all public schools; even the private teaching of Polish was prohibited. When a general school strike ensued, children were beaten and parents fined and jailed, in utter disregard of protests throughout Europe. Countless non-naturalized Poles and Jews were expelled from the eastern districts, and Polish estates were expropriated and handed over to German colonists. A special militant outfit, Alldeutscher Verband (Pan-German League), founded in 1891, saw to it that the administrators of provinces with mixed populations did not relax in their efforts to Germanize the regions, cost what it might. How the German armies

behaved to the civilian populations of France, Belgium, Poland in World War I is common knowledge.

Through the Treaty of Versailles Germany lost, in addition to her colonies in Africa and elsewhere, some of her border provinces with a population of six million, the vast majority of whom were non-Germans. German nationalists howled about the "injustice" created by the Treaty, especially about the establishment of a Corridor giving Poland access to the Baltic Sea. But these hotspurs not only glibly forgot that the Corridor was mainly populated by Polish and quasi-Polish people (e.g. the Masurians), whom the Germans had been unable to Germanize, but they were also oblivious of the fact that if the Polish Republic had not obtained this stretch of land, 30 million Poles would be blocked from the Sea. It was on the border of that Corridor that Nazi Germany, in the summer of 1939, staged attacks of "Poles" (who were actually Germans, donning Polish uniforms) on "defenseless Germans" to have an excuse for precipitating World War II.

In the 'twenties there were a few German liberals who were ready to draw a line between present and past and to remodel the Reich as a peaceful country, anxious to gain recognition in the fields of science and the arts rather than in the realm of power politics. But the dominating force was the nationalists. Their ideology was entirely inconsistent. On the one hand they deplored the fact that Germany's birth rate had been 3,025,000 under the normal rate between 1914 and 1918, that it was still low in the first post-war years, and that large numbers of Germans emigrated to overseas countries. On the other hand they declared that the poor Germans were a "Volk ohne Raum," a nation without living space, bluntly ignoring the fact that Germany had only half as many people to the square mile as Belgium, or about 2/3 as

many as Great Britain. Just as there were overcrowded regions in Germany, she had areas also that were most thinly populated. As late as 1931 Werner Horn, in a demographic study of East Prussia, frankly admitted that this large fertile area was so sparsely populated "that there would appear to be some justification for those Poles who point to the under-population of Prussia as a result of the failure of German colonization and who represent our eastern provinces as the coveted object of Polish land hunger."

The cry for "Lebensraum" was primarily a camouflage to cover up nationalistic ambitions. The inventor of that concept was the self-styled "father" of German geopolitics, Professor Karl Haushofer, deified by the Nazi bigshots. According to him, frontiers are determined, not by geography, but by armies. To him the German "Lebensraum" was not merely a place large enough for a people to live in, but a vast program of expansion that would establish the Germans as a master race; to Haushofer, the earth was a battlefield, human beings were just cannon fodder; being the heart of the earth, Germany must rule the globe, including the USA which were not a true nation but a "loblolly of mongrelized, loosely linked provinces."

In the 'twenties German nationalists discovered the "Auslandsdeutschtum," the Germans living outside the Reich. Estimates of these "unredeemed" Germans ranged from 10 to 50 million people, for some German chauvinists included in Germany's sphere of interest not only the German groups in Alsace Lorraine, the Sudeten lands, or the Corridor, but also those in Northern Italy, Northern Yugoslavia, in Hungary, Roumania, and Russia, the Austrians and the German-speaking Swiss people, and even the Americans of German stock!

In Pan-German dreams the "Auslandsdeutschtum" figured as Fifth Columnists helping the German armies to conquer

any country they cared for; the same Hitler who, in the fall of 1938, hypocritically declared that he merely wanted to re-unite the Sudeten Germans with the Reich, but that he would not demand to have "a single Czech," several months later occupied the greater part of Czechoslovakia. What Hitler offered his Germans was nothing but the "good, old" Pan-Germanism of Treitschke; all that the Nazis added was the transformation of the race concept into a weapon of conquest and destruction, and the unscrupulous physical destruction of non-Germans, the aforementioned scheme of Genocide. As far as the German language is concerned, the demographic warriors of Nazism "enriched" it, coining a few terms which, thank God, can't be easily translated into other languages: "Umvolkung" (the more or less forcible process of changing the nationality of an individual or group); "Rueckvolkung" (whereby an individual or group of allegedly Teutonic origin are being reclaimed for the Fatherland); "Einschmelzung" (the procedure whereby people of non-German descent but of a Teutonic physique and character are, by special privilege, admitted into the German racial state), and finally "Ausschmelzung" (the expulsion of non-desirable elements, a process that led to the death chambers of Auschwitz and Maidanek).

Hitler and his associates knew that the doctrines of racism were plain nonsense. "I know perfectly well," Hitler remarked to his friend Rauschning, "just as well as all these tremendously clever intellectuals, that in the scientific sense there is no such thing as race." Yet he needed that precarious concept in order to destroy with it the old system of society: "With the conception of race, National Socialism will carry its revolution abroad and recast the world." Likewise, Hitler did not care "two straws"—these were his own words—whether or not the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were



genuine; nevertheless, he used them unscrupulously in his campaign of hatred.

What has been known as "Genocide" since 1944 had been described in its details by Hitler in his talks with Rauschning a decade earlier:

We are obliged to depopulate, as part of our mission of preserving the German population. We shall have to develop a technique of depopulation. If you ask me what I mean by depopulation, I mean the removal of entire racial units. And that is what I intend to carry out . . . Nature is cruel, therefore we, too, may be cruel. If I can send the flower of the German nation into the hell of war, without the smallest pity for the spilling of precious German blood, then surely I have the right to remove millions of an inferior race that breeds like vermin.

To make the Germans the strongest nation on the European continent, whatever the outcome of the war, the Nazis took three steps:

- a) They endeavored to improve the health of the German nation through better feeding (at the expense of others) and by raising the birth rate;
- b) They Germanized a large number of individuals, especially children (the exact numbers will never be ascertained);
- c) They exterminated millions of Poles, Jews, and other "inferior" races.

All dictatorships welcome and encourage, of course, vast population increases through higher birth rates, but Nazi Germany was more systematic, more "gruendlich" in this matter than any other country. Since 1933 numerous laws encouraged early marriage and frequent childbirth; the Nazi state gave generous marriage loans and outright grants for each child; the birth of illegitimate children, provided they were of Nordic stock, was generously encouraged. The result was that from 1933 to 1939 marriages increased by 800,000 and births by 1,566,000. Professor Friedrich Burgdoerfer, Nazi demographic specialist, once called this increase "an act of confidence in the future, given by the German people to their Fuehrer and their Reich." During

World War II every possible effort was made to keep the birth rate on the pre-war high level. Regular leaves were granted to the soldiers and the importance to the Fatherland of their begetting children was duly impressed on them when they got furloughs home. War time marriages were encouraged and German women were not mobilized for work in war factories on anything like the scale they were in Britain and Russia. As a result of these measures, in the first four years of World War II the German birth rate declined by only 761,000, a drop only one-quarter as great as occurred during similar periods in World War I.

The Nazis did not stop there, but engaged in "Rueckvolkung" and "Einvolkung" on a large scale. On August 16, 1943, Alexander Werth, correspondent of *The New York Times*, reported from Orel, Russia, that colonists of Germanic stock who had lived in the province for many generations, had been forcibly taken off to "Litzmannstadt" (Lodz) where they had to go through a test as to whether they were good Nordic "Aryans," after which they would be settled in western Poland, annexed by the Reich. One man, Werth reported, happily returned from Lodz: he said he had failed in his "Aryan" blood test, had been recognized as of Slav blood, and had therefore been sent back to Orel.

The Luxembourgers had to be reclaimed, too: "The superficial French polish," said the Nazi gauleiter, "that until now has barred the real expression of the Luxembourg spirit which has always been truly German must disappear at all costs." In particular, the Nazis preferred to "re-educate" children, especially orphans. During the post-war trial of the Lidice war criminals it was discovered that nine Czech children from Lidice had been spirited away by the Nazis; classified as "racially" valuable, they had been furnished with false German names and forged papers and placed as foster chil-

dren in German homes. At that trial the prosecutors revealed that 1,200,000 nationals or residents of countries outside Germany had been removed from their homes by the Nazis who considered them ethnic Germans. Many were forced into German military units. Others were sterilized or killed as a penalty for refusal to bear arms against their allies.

But the third step, "Ausrottung," the extermination of undesirable races, yielded much bigger and faster results. So many *Black Books* have been written on that dreary subject, that we need not dwell on it any longer. According to Eugen Kogon's *Der SS-Staat* and Benedikt Kautsky's *Teufel und Verdammte* about nine million civilians perished in various concentration and labor camps (mostly Jews, Slavs, and Gypsies). An undisclosed number of civilians were sterilized or castrated. In 1943 or 1944 a German physician, Dr. Pokorny, wrote to Himmler: "The thought alone that the three million Bolsheviks now in German captivity could be sterilized, so that they would be available for work but precluded from propagation, opens up the most far-reaching perspectives" (Victor H. Bernstein, *Final Judgment*). It was certainly not the Nazis' fault that this striking plan could not be carried out.

Perhaps the most infernal chapter of Nazism's demographic war is, however, Nazism's ingenious method of using food as a weapon: by feeding the Germans and putting the other nations on starvation diets, the Nazi war lords hoped to accomplish a permanent shift in the demographic balance of Europe. "The conquered territories are the most fertile in Europe," Goering boasted in 1942. "If through enemy measures privation is unavoidable, it will in no circumstances affect Germany . . . The German people come before all other peoples for food." Robert Ley, Reich Labor leader, was even more outspoken: "A lower race needs less room, less clothing, less food

than the German people." (See *Starvation Over Europe*, published by the Institute of Jewish Affairs, New York, 1943.) While in Paris and Naples people died after having eaten poisoned rat meat, many Germans enjoyed better diet during the war than they had before it. A US Army medical report declared that there had been no epidemics in the Reich during the war, no increase in psychiatric disorders; despite the bombings, the excellent level of the public health in Germany was remarkable.

Hence Germany, despite her technical loss of the second World War, won a great demographic victory of far-reaching consequences by assuring an increase of the German population and radically reducing the population of neighboring states in line with a carefully conceived program to achieve just this end. This is, at least, the verdict of the aforementioned International Committee for the Study of European Questions which includes such well-known personalities as Lord Vansittart and Professor D. W. Brogan; the Danish statesman, Christmas Moeller; and Edouard Herriot and Paul Claudel of France.

Let's examine the facts. In 1935 Germany's total population was estimated at 67 million; by the end of 1945 about 65,250,000 Germans lived in all four zones of occupation. An additional seven million of German refugees poured in from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Poland-occupied Eastern Germany. Two million prisoners of war are expected to return to the Reich in the near future and to raise Germany's total population to nearly 75 million. When this will have taken place, Germany's population will be almost one-tenth higher than it was when Hitler assumed power. In other words, Germany will have a larger population than before to maintain in three quarters of the living room that she thought insufficient before World War II. At the same time, there will be

large empty spaces just outside Germany, namely in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and some of the countries annexed by the Soviet Union, that had been depopulated during the war. It should not be difficult to guess to what dire consequences such a situation might lead, if only on account of certain laws of physics.

The aforementioned Committee estimated Germany's total war losses at 3.5 million, while the Allies are said to have lost 15 million people, (excluding losses suffered by the US armed forces). We believe, though, that Professor Saul K. Padover's figures are more convincing: Nazi Germany lost less than two and a half million people (as compared to nearly three million in World War I), causing at the same time the deaths of 20-25 million non-Germans. According to the professor, Germany fought a "cheap war," in terms of human lives; teeming with children, the country constitutes a great potential danger, unless the new generation undergoes a revolutionary change (*Experiment in Germany*, 1946). Surely, the Committee did not include in its figures the millions that perished in Nazi death camps!

But this is not all. Germany kept the birth rates low in vast regions of Europe by depriving 12 million slave workers, toiling far away from their homes in German factories and labor camps, from raising families. While in war-time Germany the food ration amounted to 2,600 calories for the average person and some categories of the population received up to 3,500 calories, Germany's victims were starved systematically, a fact that caused a noticeable decline in the birth rate and a tremendous rise of infant mortality. To this day millions of adults and children in France and Poland are tubercular, and the poor health of most of the Displaced Persons in the camps in Germany, Austria, and Italy adds to the tragedy of Hitler's victims.

There are voices, though, claiming that Hitler did not win Germany's demographic war. According to a report prepared by the Civil Administration Division of the United States Military Government (*New York Times*, November 23, 1947) Germany's population, after a short period of further increase, is likely to fall. The question "Did Germany Win the Demographic War?" is also answered negatively by Messrs. Hoyt Price and Carl E. Schorske (*The Problem of Germany*, 1947). They note a low birth rate in post-war Germany, a great excess of women over men, and a tremendous rise of birth rates in all Allied countries, despite the dire economic conditions. Germany, they assert, did not win the demographic war any more than she won the military war: "It is true that the Germans will continue to be the most numerous ethnic group in Europe west of the Slavs. But their relative importance in Europe will continue to decline, especially in relation to the Slavs."

*Qui vivra verra.* In the meantime, two small news items should be contemplated carefully, because of the lessons they may teach us. Number One: "The Germans who remain in Poland polonize themselves with typical German zeal—the same kind they displayed in adjusting themselves to the Nazi regime. They study the Polish language diligently. In many instances German technicians working in Silesian plants asked spontaneously for the removal of the German half of the inscriptions and danger warnings from electrical installations and stores of chemicals" (S. L. Shneiderman, *Between Fear and Hope*, 1947).

Item Number Two: In the fall of 1947 eighty per cent of the population of the Saar voted for economic fusion with France with political annexation soon to follow; in 1935 ninety per cent of the same populace had voted for reunion with the Third Reich. Apparently, the wave of Teutonism is receding in favor of a

wave of reason, regardless of whether or not Hitler has won the war of numbers.

Reviewing the damage caused by German imperialism between 1933 and 1945 we ought to remember that the world at large is not free of guilt, either. Hitler would not have won a single victory, had not the members of the League of Nations permitted the various Minorities Treaties to become mere scraps of paper. The defeat at Munich of Collective Security, and World War II itself were precipitated by quarrels over minorities problems. The late Wendell Willkie was one of those far-sighted politicians who felt the necessity for protecting the rights of minorities:

It has always impressed me that, quite apart from any reasons of humanitarianism or justice or any sentiment regarding the protection of the weak by the strong, it is only common sense to safeguard jealously the rights of minorities. For minorities are rich assets of a democracy, assets which no totalitarian government can afford. Dictatorships must, of necessity, fear and suppress them. But within the tolerance of a democracy, minorities are the constant spring of new ideas, stimulating new thought and action, the constant source of new vigor.

Lest "it" happen again, the United Nations should see to it that all over the world racial or religious minorities are protected efficiently against the dire plans of any potential aggressors and would-be-Hitlers. Furthermore, the recent reso-

lution of the United Nations General Assembly condemning genocide must be followed by a statute in international law under which individuals committing crimes of genocide may be tried even in times of peace. The Nazi regime might have collapsed and thus World War II might have been avoided, had, in November 1938, if not earlier, the League of Nations actively and unequivocally intervened in behalf of the severely persecuted Jewish minority in Germany.



Torah and Wisdom

BEREL SATT

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*"One of the most stirring demonstrations was made in Haifa during a British curfew. The Haganah ordered the Jews of Haifa to march out and break the curfew. This demonstration was ordered not simply to create a riot but because there were over two thousand Jews out on the high seas waiting to be brought in and a diverting action was required. That night the Haifa community marched out and faced the British with their bare breasts. Three Jews of the Haganah who were in the vanguard were killed in Haifa that day, but over two thousand Jews were safely landed by the Haganah in Palestine."*

HELEN WARREN, *The Buried Are Screaming*



# MIDWESTERN COMMENTARY

by

ELMER GERTZ

THE *Sentinel* CASE HAS AROUSED NATION-wide attention. For its implications go far beyond the thirty-year old Anglo-Jewish weekly magazine published in Chicago, which is directly involved. The case had its origin in the Washington sedition trial fiasco. It will be remembered that the trial ended with the death of the presiding judge after several months had been spent in presenting evidence and battling with defense counsel and their vociferous clients. A fortnight after the trial ended, as far back as December, 1944, the *Sentinel*, like many other newspapers, reprinted a press release issued by the National Committee to Combat Anti-Semitism, in which it was stated that the Committee had urged the Attorney General to retry the notorious defendants, who were described in very strong language. Thereupon ten of the defendants sued the *Sentinel* for libel, through Attorney Maximilian St. George.

Elizabeth Dilling, author of *The Red Network* and similar writings, asked \$100,000 damages; the others asked \$10,000.00 each. The defence was a plea of the truth and was based necessarily upon the writings of the plaintiffs, all of whom (except for Lawrence Dennis) were alleged by the defendants to be anti-Semites following the line of persons of similar stripe in Fascist lands. Dennis is more intellectual, if you can call it that, than his associates, but has long preached *The Coming American Fascism* (the title

of one of his books). Jurors were selected because they professed no bias against anti-Semites. In the trial itself, long anti-Semitic speeches were permitted. The jury responded by awarding \$9,000.00 damages to Joe McWilliams, \$10,000.00 to Lawrence Dennis, \$5,000.00 to E. J. Parker Sage and \$100.00 to George E. Deatherage. No agreement was reached by the jury as to Elizabeth Dilling, Charles Hudson, and Ernest Elmhurst, necessitating a retrial of their cases. The *Sentinel* was found "not guilty" only as to Robert E. Edmondson, Col. Eugene N. Sanctuary, and Wm. R. Lyman, Jr. Motions for a new trial were argued at some length by Augustine Bowe, the original defence counsel, and Max Swiren, who was called in as additional counsel. Judge Donald S. McKinlay, who presided refused to do anything with regard to the jury verdicts. "It's just an ordinary case," he said. "Let the Appellate Court decide if error was committed." Of course, the case will be appealed. We may be sure that the appeal will be handled with the utmost care.

It is wrong, I suppose, to comment at this time in detail as to any aspect of the trial, or the appeal, but it is difficult to maintain a discreet silence. One can only express the hope that in the end the supposedly innate sense of justice of the American people will prevail. It is also necessary to reemphasize that this situation involves not only the *Sentinel* and

the Jewish community, but all people of good will. In a very real sense, this city and the nation are on trial. The question is whether, succumbing to hate, we are to make a mockery of the concept of the Melting Pot, whether we are to laugh at the notion that all men are created equal.

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THE JOHN P. ALTGELD CENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES on and around December 30, 1947, marked the ultimate recognition of the greatness of one of the most maligned and misunderstood Americans of history. The centennial celebration was capped by a dinner, the like of which I have never attended. No one who was present is ever likely to forget it. Chairman Stephen Mitchell, Governor Green, Mayor Kennelly, Cardinal Stritch, Carl Sandburg, and Mr. Justice William O. Douglas all emphasized the present day meanings of the career, character, and philosophy of the harelippped and unprepossessing German immigrant who knowingly and courageously sacrificed his health, fortune, position, and power for the sake of truth, justice, and liberty. Supreme Court Justice Douglas, in particular, emphasized Gov. Altgeld's fight against intolerance, discrimination, and special privilege. He warned that just as Altgeld was called subversive in his day for championing unpopular causes, other men today are hounded and harassed for the espousal of what they believe to be right. He said that America must practice fair play for peoples of all races and creeds if it is to maintain the respect of the world and win the battle against totalitarianism.

The speaker's table and the audience were a *Who's Who* of Chicago liberalism. Almost every one who has fought the good fight was there, people of all races, colors, creeds, nationalities, callings, and beliefs. It did one good to observe the intermingling of peoples at the tables and in the corridors. One felt that the

inspiration would not vanish with the event; that the city, the state, the entire Middle West, and all America would be the richer for this experience.

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ON JANUARY 6, 1948, CARL SANDBURG, THE immortal poet of the Middle Western prairies, reached his seventieth birthday and the event was celebrated here and there as evidence of the continuing American process of amalgamating the diverse peoples of the earth. This son of Swedish immigrant parents was hailed as the singing philosopher of the democratic creed. The Chicago Public Library issued a special Bulletin in Sandburg's honor, which I had the privilege of writing. The evening before his birthday, Sandburg's closest Chicago friends drank toasts with him and broke bread together. As I looked around the room, I saw distinguished sons and daughters of the community whose origins embraced all nationalities: Jewish, Irish, Swedish, Scottish, German, English, Welsh, French, and a United Nations of others. Sandburg has always loved people and hated prejudice and injustice. His poetic testament, *The People, Yes*, should be required reading in all schools and churches and wherever people congregate. It teaches the Gospel of humanity in unforgettable terms.

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IN CHICAGO, TOO, HENRY WALLACE ANNOUNCED his third party candidacy for president of the United States. I do not propose to say anything here for or against Wallace's candidacy; but I think it important to point out that insurgent and independent political movements have often been associated with the various immigrant groups and with the defense of the basic rights of the people, particularly of the minorities. The down-trodden Negro, the dispossessed worker, the disadvantaged foreign-born, are likely

to see in a third party their hope for a new turn in the wheel of fortune. When Roosevelt was president, these people reposed their faith in him. Since his death they are seeking for a place to go. Wallace, the man who preached *The Century of the Common Man* and who advocated milk for the Hottentots and T.V.A.'s on the Danube, may or may not now win their loyalty. The campaign will be worthy of the closest attention on the part of all people seeking to bring this nation closer in actuality to its professed ideals. Chicago and the Middle West will be an important battleground in this struggle.

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AS POINTED OUT PREVIOUSLY, K.A.M. Temple, on the south side of Chicago, recently observed its one hundredth birthday; and now, on January 11, Temple Sholom, on the north side, observed its eightieth anniversary with befitting ceremonies. This Temple, under the leadership of Rabbi Louis Binstock, has become probably the largest reform congregation of the country. Its growth is symptomatic of the growth of the reform movement in general, just as was the progress of K.A.M.

It is a real tribute to the democratic spirit of Rabbi Binstock, who is a native of the South, that he is the president of the Chicago Urban League, a bi-racial group which strives earnestly to ameliorate conditions among the Negroes. Temple Sholom participates in all civic and cultural activities. It strives to meet the daily needs of its people. It recognizes that man needs more than prayer for sustenance. The latest of its projects, I understand, is a child care clinic, which will soon be established with the aid of Dr. Rudolph Dreikurs and the Individual Psychology Association.

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THE LATTER GROUP OF ADLERIAN PSYCHOLOGISTS already has a child care clinic at

the Abraham Lincoln Center in the midst of the black belt, and one at Henry Booth House, in another submerged area of the city. It hopes soon to have as many such clinics as in pre-war Vienna. More and more it is realized that individual tensions, like group tensions, undermine the society in which we live. They must be combatted, from childhood on.

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THERE WOULD BE MUCH LESS LIKELIHOOD of such tragedies as *The Sentinel* case if there were better psychological orientation on the part of all people, as anti-Semitism is one of the outstanding mental dislocations.

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ON DECEMBER 19, 1947, THOMAS H. WRIGHT, executive director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations, reported to the guests who were present on the occasion of the presentation of the second annual awards on human relations. He told of many gains in the fields of public education, information, health and welfare, employment, housing, civil rights, recreation, community organization, and public policy. Several of these things have been pointed out from time to time in these columns. They make for a cheerful picture; but there is another side to the story—the *Sentinel* case is an example. The commission's awards were given to the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, "for hiring and training qualified Negro girls as switchboard operators" and integrating them into the regular force without segregation; to the South Center Department Store, for pioneering in the employment of Negro personnel and for its enlightened merchandising policy; to Father Daniel Cantwell, whose saintly spirit has done so much to ease tensions; Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein, the Rev. Edwin Ray Bond, John M. Lang, Mrs. Nellie F. Ryan, Mrs. Walter R. Sassaman, and Miss Lea D. Taylor, for

their courageous, enlightened, and continuous efforts for better race relations in tension areas; the Chicago Park District, for initiating a program of training in human relations for its police officers (would that the city police would follow this lead!), the Chicago Housing Authority, for reasons that are now well known, and the First Baptist Church for its full acceptance in pulpit and pews, of people of Japanese ancestry.

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THE CHICAGO COUNCIL AGAINST RACIAL AND Religious Discrimination, itself one of the great enlightening forces of the community, also selects each year an honor roll for meritorious service in the city and nation and a list of the most useful books and pamphlets in the cause of brotherhood. At the same time, it presents a black-list of the setbacks of the year. Its 1947 city honor roll is of particular interest. Ten Chicago organizations and individuals were cited: the Chicago Housing Authority, "for maintaining its non-discriminatory tenant selection policy under great political pressures;" the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations, "for mediating tension situations without remaining neutral in the face of injustice;" good-will elements in the Fernwood-Roseland-Morgan Park area, "for attempting to mobilize community spirit to welcome Negro veterans to the Fernwood Housing Project;" the student council of Wells High School "for its leadership in stopping a student race strike;" the Chicago City Council for enacting an ordinance against vandalism by bigots and an ordinance making the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations a regular department of the city government; Lea Taylor, head resident of Chicago Commons, "for leadership in developing inter-group relations in a community under great tension;" the *Chicago Daily News*, "for outstanding news and editorial treatment of achievements and problems in

the field of inter-group relations;" James O. Supple, the religion reporter of the *Chicago Sun*, for his "consistent reportorial emphasis on the relationship of the Church" to civic unity; Elmer Gertz, "for outstanding services as a citizen in helping to lessen inter-group tensions, particularly in the field of housing;" and the blue ribbon coroner's jury headed by Horace Cayton, "for making a comprehensive, hard-hitting report on the fatal W. Ohio St. fire."

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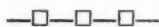
WE IN CHICAGO SOMETIMES TEND TO FORGET that there are alert Jewish communities in several other middle Western cities, such as Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis. I am reminded of this constantly as I read two of the best Anglo-Jewish publications of the country, *The Jewish News* of Detroit and, above all, *The National Jewish Post* of Indianapolis. I am often tempted to clip from these newspapers articles and excerpts which will be of value to Jews of our own community.

In a recent issue of the *Post*, for example, there was a revealing but distressing article by Irving White about student life at Northwestern University. At the Evanston institution there appears to be no consciousness of Jewish existence; all is "rah-rah" and frivolity in almost pathetic imitation of the Gentile fraternities. Northwestern is notorious for its subtle and not so subtle forms of discrimination and prejudice, and the Jews there by inaction and disinterest give countenance to the un-American practices.

The situation at the University of Chicago, I might add, is considerably different. The University itself, although by no means free from discriminatory practices, is far more enlightened in that regard than Northwestern. But neither the Jewish students nor the Gentiles are content with "better;" they want "best," and are



ready to fight for it. When the student chapter of the American Veterans Committee and other groups protested against the anti-Negro practices of the Billings Hospital and Clinic at the University, they made national news. Chancellor Hutchins, always responsive to pressures of that nature, took notice. One may safely predict that Chicago will be one of the first institutions of higher learning in America to act wholly in the spirit of the now famous report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights. When a university has Negroes and Jews on its faculty, as Chicago has, a start has been made. From there we go to the ultimate, complete freedom from prejudice.



IN EVERY COMMUNITY THERE ARE LITTLE magazines that are more significant than the larger publications. One such magazine here is called *Work*. It is published by the Catholic Labor Alliance "for all who work for a living." Its fixed stars are social justice and non-discrimination. Although largely Catholic in membership, the Catholic Labor Alliance is open to Protestants and Jews as well. It has the blessing of Cardinal Stritch. Here is an excerpt from a recent leading editorial in *Work*: "It is too bad that Hollywood must bow before the anti-red hysteria. It is bad for our democratic way of life, for the God-given rights of our citizens, and for the cause of justice and truth."

LATE IN THE PAST YEAR, THE DECISION WAS made in Chicago to give permanence to the American Jewish Conference. There is no point at this late date in giving the details of the Conference, for the Jewish press has carried full discussions. The debate as to the decision has gone on, and will go on, with considerable heat. One thing is clear, and it cannot be reemphasized often enough: The Conference will not be a permanent institution simply by fiat. It will take real planning, persistence, and statesmanship to breathe life into the organization. If it succeeds, it will be because the usefulness of the organization will have been demonstrated in practice, and not merely in words. The concept of unity, like peace, is a wonderful one; but it calls for more than a shibboleth. In a sense, it is like the debate over the United Nations. Who is going to surrender the veto power? Who is going to surrender sovereignty? Who is going to make the sacrifices, carry the burdens, do the work? Later this year we may have some answers to these all-important questions.



JOHN BALABAN AND THE OTHER LEADERS OF the Jewish Welfare Fund drive in Chicago have received deserved kudos in many places. The big test of the generosity of the community lies ahead. There is back-breaking work for every one during 1948, and failure is inconceivable.

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*"By 'the chosen people' we do not mean that we are a people singled out for special favors or privileges; we do not mean that we are better than other people are, therefore, divinely selected to rule over them; and we do not mean that by selecting Israel as 'His peculiar people' God has rejected the other peoples of the world . . . The true meaning of 'the chosen people' is that God has selected Israel from all the nations to be His special servant, to teach the world the knowledge of Him."*

BERYL D. COHON, *Introduction to Judaism*



*Freedom of Religion*

A. RAYMOND KATZ

# NEW YORK NOTES

By VERO

YOUR REPORTER could not help being deeply moved when he was ushered into Rabbi Leo Baeck's suite at New York's Plaza Hotel. The 73-year-old German-Jewish hero and martyr had just arrived here from London. Currently Dr. Baeck is making a tour of major Jewish centers in the USA under the auspices of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in order to arouse the Jewish community to the need of a revitalized Judaism in the spirit of the founders of the Liberal Jewish movement.

We have no picture of that ancient sage, Hillel, yet "Hillel must have looked like that!" I said to myself when seeing Dr. Baeck, as his profoundly kind eyes turned towards me and he began answering my questions in a soft and reassuring voice. For ten years he had headed the remnants of German Jewry in the Nazi Reich, trying to mitigate or at least postpone some of the most brutal anti-Semitic decrees and actions. A temple in Cincinnati offered Baeck the position of associate rabbi, but he would not leave his flock, deciding to stay on his job, like a good captain who is the last to leave the sinking ship.

Eventually taken to the "model" ghetto of Terezin, Baeck "lived" in that dismal concentration camp from March 1943 until May 1945 when he and six hundred other survivors (out of an original number of fifty-thousand) were liberated by the Red Army. But when I asked him whether, in his opinion, the Germans

could be re-educated, he declared, with a magnanimity worthy of a Hillel that this question could not be answered as long as many Germans were starving, and that they had first to be fed, and only then to be redeemed. Asked to convey a message to American Jewry, the tall lean man with the white hair and neatly trimmed white goatee said, with great firmness: "Be complete by being religious! A Jew without religion is an incomplete man!"

A collection of essays by Dr. Baeck has just been published by Schocken Books, New York. Curiously, his most important book, *Essence of Judaism*, has recently appeared in a—Japanese translation!

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ONE OF OUR ABLEST EDUCATORS is Dr. Isaac Bildersee, an assistant superintendent in the Brooklyn Schools. Last December he announced a ban on religious celebrations, both Christian and Jewish, in the schools of his section on the grounds that state and church are supposed to be kept separated. The Brownsville section, to which the ban was to have applied, has 20,000 Jewish school children out of a total of 30,000. Dr. Bildersee's action was legally justified insofar as, according to our Constitution, all public institutions of learning, supported by public tax funds, are supposed to be strictly secular. Yet though his order was in accord with the letter and spirit of American public education, he

and his ban were the target of anti-Semitic attacks, he had to retreat and even to apologize for the step he had taken. The ban was lifted, and the 20,000 Jewish children in the Brownsville schools were compelled to sing Christmas Carols and to participate in other Christmas celebrations as they had done in earlier years.

We're no religious fanatics; on the contrary, we want equal freedom for all religions, and that's precisely why we can't agree with the Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale who dismissed the matter by saying that it would not do a Jewish boy any harm to join with his playmates in singing "the great hymns of Christendom." Well, by the same logic a Christian would be compelled to sing *Maoz Tsur* on Hanukkah. We think, however, that religion's proper place is, not the school, but the church, at least as far as public schools are concerned. The same wall that separates Church and State should, in this country, separate Church and School. This incidentally, is also the official view of such an old and respected organization as the American Jewish Congress. For instance, AJC, in a recent pamphlet, attacked the so-called Released Time Plan through which religious education would be forced upon the American child:

Released time represents a threat to the American principle of the separation of church and state, particularly, but not limited to, programs involving use of public school classrooms for the released time classes. By bringing religious differences into the public schools, the program is a divisive influence, and in actual practice frequently promotes inter-religious friction and disharmony. (Leo Pfeffer, *Religion and the Public Schools*)

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**A**T THE SAME TIME we insist upon full freedom for all religious groups, including the smallest one. Take the Quakers, who have fewer than 100,000 followers in the USA. In Brooklyn they own a Meeting Place and School, about a century old,

considered a classic example of its style of earlier American architecture. Suddenly the Friends were told that their building was doomed for destruction by the City Fathers, who plan to erect the new Brooklyn City Jail on the site of the Friends' School. Now the Friends complain that they do not have the money to erect a new meeting house and school, and they wonder why their historic establishment should be razed when equally suitable city-owned land is available less than a block away. Personally, I can't blame them for charging that if they should lose their property, this would in effect be "a direct attack on the free practice of religion in the Borough."

It is significant that many Jewish civic leaders and representatives of Jewish organizations joined their Christian fellow-townsmen in a swelling chorus of protest criticizing the city administration for its proposed step. This is as it should be: Jews are bound to be among the first to rise to the help of a Christian sect that, in the past three centuries, from its very beginnings, has suffered a great deal of persecution while, at the same time offering aid to everyone, regardless of race, creed, or nationality. During the Hitler era thousands of European Jews were saved by Quakers who helped them escape into lands of freedom!

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**S**OMETHING IS ROTTEN in the State of New York. For months, nay, years, we have been hearing of proposals to establish here a State University as a major contribution to the Empire State's fight against discrimination in education. But so far all we've got is double-talk. The Commission which Governor Dewey appointed years ago to determine whether a State University is needed has declared in favor of establishing one. Although the Governor knows that a decisive step has to be taken, he is afraid of taking it. After all, eighty private college presidents



and eighty powerful Boards of Trustees resent the competition of state-subsidized higher education. Moreover, certain religious groups consistently oppose expansion by government into the domain of education.

On the one hand it is politically safer not to push for a state university; on the other hand, the shame of the quota system smells all over the state; hence, Hamlet Dewey was compelled to do something about it. He is going to ask the 1948 State Legislature to outlaw racial and religious discrimination in the admission of students to private, non-sectarian colleges and universities throughout the state. Fine—but will this step yield any tangible results? The colleges will—sincerely or otherwise—resent what they consider an interference with their rights. Only recently a committee of the American Colleges Association declared emphatically that the problem of discrimination should be solved by voluntary action and not by coercive legislation, since the latter would place in the hands of the state a threat to the freedom of colleges so far independent of political control.

But Dewey and his fellow-Republicans have another iron in the fire. They have suggested that Syracuse University should be taken over by New York and transformed into a State University. Thereupon the Democrats charged (and rightly so) that labelling heavily overcrowded Syracuse U. a State University would amount to calling a rose by another name, that it would be merely a paper transaction both misleading to the public and costly to the state. Instead, the Democrats demand the immediate establishment of a genuine state university, large and modern, that should be available to all youths, regardless of their racial, religious, or national origins. That University should include several liberal arts colleges, medical and dental schools as well as schools of nursing. It remains to be seen whether power politics or responsible thinking

will gain the upper hand in the Empire State. The Quota System is, after all, a real threat to American democracy; moreover, there is need for additional colleges, anyway. The number of New York's youth desiring higher education will soon reach the figure of 300,000 whereas so far the total capacity of all colleges and universities in New York State is about 170,000!

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**A** GIFTED ARTIST thirty-five year old, Norman Leibovitch from Montreal has had his first American one-man show in New York's Norlyst Gallery. Whatever the Bible says about the prophet who is not without honor save in his own country, this is not true in the case of Leibovitch whose talents have been widely hailed in the Province of Quebec. Well, Leibovitch is no prophet, he is not even an experimenter in the realm of art; if you wish to label him, you might call him an expressionist insofar as he rejects the photographic imitation of the outer world of reality for the expression of an inner world of feeling and imagination. Critics in French Canada have welcomed him as "un paysagiste," apparently preferring his Canadian and Mexican landscapes with their strikingly rich colors to his more outspokenly expressionist figure studies. Personally, I like best his Jewish subjects. There is one showing a group of bearded old Jews assembled around a Torah: the Scroll becomes a symbol not just of ritual but of love and longing; the worshipers are bound by the same sorrow, passion, love, thus becoming one: Israel. One painting shows a Jewish peddler, epitomizing, at the same time, the need for a journey out of darkness, as the man leans forward—towards tomorrow. And there is one canvas that I shall call: "Nu?" Questioning hands are outstretched, waiting for an answer—and knowing that there is none.

While Leibovitch works with bold

brush strokes, omitting all details, concerned as he is with the psychological rather than the photographic truth, seventy-year-old Saul Raskin feels that all details are important. His new giant volume, *Land of Israel*, containing reproductions of more than 300 drawings and paintings he made during five visits to the Holy Land, has been given much attention in New York's Jewish art circles. Raskin is, undoubtedly, at his best when, with his profound humanity, he portrays people. He is superb in catching individuals or crowds at revealing moments, and occasionally he expresses volumes in a telling gesture. There are about seventy different groups of Jews in the Holy Land, and Raskin sketched them all—bearded Jews with long ear-locks lamenting at the Wailing Wall, pioneers clearing sand away in big trucks, Talmudists meditating over their tomes, and careless youth dancing the *hora*.

Raskin's Palestinian landscapes are often too rigid to convey the warmth and splendor of the ancient country. But there are a number of city scenes that are not overdrawn; here, the artist achieves strong effects through the contrast of black and white, and through the prodigal use of white areas, suggestive of the blazing sunlight.

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THE GREATNESS of Hayim Nachman Bialik is known to everyone familiar with the Hebrew language, but not to the non-Hebraists. Soon, however, English-speaking Jews (and their Gentile friends as well) will have an opportunity of availing themselves of the translation of the complete poetical works of that outstanding poet into the English language. Under the editorship of Dr. Israel Efros, professor of Hebrew at New York's Hunter College, some of our best English translators participated in the gigantic task. Furnished with many beautiful illustrations by Lionel S. Reiss of *My*

*Models Were Jews* fame the first of the planned two large volumes will be issued sometime in 1948.

All this I learned at the annual banquet of the Histadruth Ivrit of America, held at New York's Astor Hotel. Dr. Emmanuel Neumann, president of the Zionist Organization of America told the audience that "the time is coming soon, I hope, when a Jewish leader, big or little, of the laity or of the cloth, will be ashamed to admit his ignorance, his inability to read a Hebrew book or the editorials appearing in the Hebrew press." Menahem Ribalow, editor of *Hadoar*, expressed himself in a similar vein: "Now that the Jewish state is reborn, all American Jews interested in the Jewish state as a cultural fountain-head and Jewish center, should make it their business to obtain a maximum knowledge of Hebrew so that they can acquaint themselves with the cultural treasures which will be forthcoming from the new state."

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THE NOVEMBER ISSUE of *Ebony*, a richly illustrated monthly catering to the Colored People, contained an editorial, "Time to Count Our Blessings" which told American Negroes to stop complaining about their status and, instead, to remember all the advantages they enjoy in comparison with so many millions of starved and backward people in Europe. To judge by the Letters to the Editor, printed in subsequent issues of *Ebony*, not all readers agree entirely with the optimistic outlook of the editorial-writer. Remarks a reader from the Midwest: "It is true that the American Negro has a fuller stomach, more telephones, more automobiles, and many other mechanical conveniences than most of the world's millions. But can America's genius in the sphere of material productivity ever compensate for her inequities in the sphere of human relations? Nothing material is equivalent to human dignity." On the other hand, a

New York Negro wonders whether his own people are always truly representative of the best that a Negro can offer: "Uncle Tom is dead, but he has been replaced by a type who, in my opinion, impedes the progress of his people not a whit less. The new Uncle Tom, while despising everything and everyone white, calumniates every effort and every accomplishment by Negroes. All that he is and all that he does is governed by his narrow racism. Although often affecting the role of mundane sophistication, the new Uncle Tom is in fact provincial, petty, and ignorant."

As a resident of a metropolis which contains dozens of racial and religious minorities, I believe that both letter-writers have said things that, unfortunately, are true. In fact, through slight changes in the text, for instance, by substituting the word "Jew," "Italian," or "Irish" etc. for "Negro," the letters can be made to apply to all minority groups, in varying degrees. The United States is far from being a paradise, but we can improve our country by improving ourselves. Obstacles on the road towards a better American society are arrogance and narrow-mindedness, whether they are displayed by minority or majority groups.

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**350** FIFTH AVENUE contains a Snake Pit, camouflaged under the harmless sounding name "National Economic Council, Inc." This is a near-Fascist organization, headed by Merwin K. Hart, a former supporter of Franco and sponsor of the notorious Christian Front. Currently this subversive outfit is being exposed by the newspaper *PM* which charges that the NEC is composed of hate-mongers, hating, first of all, all progressive forces in the USA, secondly Jews, Negroes, and other minority groups. Hart, who is backed by several big industrialists, has been trying to whitewash the Nazis; he has been at-

tacking the Zionists, and has been blaming World War II on Franklin D. Roosevelt. In a recent newsletter Hart suggested that all citizens "impressed by the potential danger," i.e. the danger of Communism in the USA (which includes *PM*, *The Nation* and *The New Republic*), should arm themselves: every citizen should possess "one or more guns, making sure that they are in good condition, that he and other members of his family know how to use them, and that he has a reasonable supply of ammunition . . . so that they (the good citizens) and their households may not be defenseless if what happened in Spain and France happens here."

A lunatic, some reader will think and lightly dismiss the matter. But twenty years ago many Germans dismissed Hitler as a harmless fool—and we know very well what has happened since.



Promenade

BEREL SATT

## WASHINGTON NOTES

By MURRAY FRANK

WE ARE usually ready to criticize our public officials, civil and military, for their shortcomings and their myopic approach to many an important problem. But here is one situation in which their approach was commendable and which unfortunately was not given the prominent space in the press it deserved. A few weeks ago, the Army devoted one of its pamphlets in the series "Armed Forces Talk" to a discussion of racial and religious prejudice and it informed all Army personnel that such prejudice endangers democracy and world peace itself.

Bluntly, the Army told its troops that prejudice "alienates the confidence of the vast non-white populations as well as other peoples, thwarts their hopes and our hopes of peace and freedom, and ultimately creates conditions from which future global wars can develop. How we treat minorities is, therefore, more than a matter of mere domestic concern." The pamphlet then points to the fact that some 13 million people in the United States were born in Europe, not counting the many millions who are first-generation Americans. It relates how a race riot in this country or the mistreatment of Mexicans or other minority groups provokes discussions and resentment throughout the world.

Much space is devoted to describing historical incidents of persecution in other countries, particularly in Germany and Japan where the "magic of race prejudice" was used to split nations open with hate and confusion. But what has become

of these two countries? What of the misery they have brought upon their own people and the whole world? The Army then states frankly that "America, too, has its shameful pages of persecution of minorities," and it opens some of these pages for all to read. There was the religious prejudice of our Colonial Period, the animosity against the Irish immigrant at about the middle of the 19th century, and the antipathy shown more recently to a host of peoples, such as Poles, Slavs, Italians, Jews, Orientals, Mexicans, and others.

"What many seem to forget," the Army reminds its personnel, "is that all of us are immigrants or the children of immigrants. No one has a right to complain about 'foreigners' unless it be the American Indian." With this as an afterthought, the Army makes the following four significant points regarding prejudice:

First, racial and religious prejudice result from ignorance and insecurity.

Second, prejudices are un-Christian, un-American, and dangerous to democracy.

Three, we are all members of minority groups which have been scapegoats at one time or another.

Four, prejudice means disunity and endangers world peace.

That is as clear a presentation of the problem as we have seen in a long time and we wish to add our word of commendation to the Army for issuing this pamphlet. It deserves wide distribution and study on the part of our men in the armed forces.



CONTINUING in the same vein, I should like to call to the reader's attention a few observations made on the floor of Congress recently by Rep. Arthur G. Klein, New York Democrat, on the subject of America as a nation of many nations. Rep. Klein took as his central theme the idea that "we are, all of us, Americans first of all." There we find these striking observations:

We may be Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans or infidels; but we are Americans. We may be Caucasians, Negro, Mongoloid, or red Indians; but we are Americans. We may have come from any country on the face of the globe, yesterday or 400 years ago; but we are Americans. Here in America we have achieved the nearest to the realization of mankind's dream of equality, freedom and justice. . . . To that accomplishment men of all creeds, of all races, of all shades of political belief, and of every kind of national derivation have contributed without stint.

Totalitarian dictators in the past have believed, or may still believe, that because we are a nation drawn from many nations they could find here fertile ground for their aggressive aims and for sowing the seeds of dissension. Thus far they have failed miserably and we have reason to hope that they will fail also in the future. As Rep. Klein so aptly said, we are the nearest thing to the realization of mankind's dream and we should not be deterred until full realization has been achieved.



THE REPORT of President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights, which we have already discussed briefly in these Notes on previous occasions, has created quite a stir throughout the country. The reaction has, in the main, been favorable. The report, published last October, calls for the immediate elimination of discrimination on the grounds of color, race, creed, or national origin, as well as for the strengthening of civil rights through specific legislation. Among its suggestions

are the following: creation of a permanent Commission on Civil Rights, a Joint Congressional Committee on Civil Rights, more stringent laws against police brutality, the outlawing of the poll-tax, an anti-lynching law, establishment of a fair employment practices committee, elimination of restrictive covenants in real estate deals aimed against Negroes, Jews, Italians, Mexicans, and other minorities, etc.

In his State of the Union address at the current session of Congress, President Truman referred to the attainment of "essential human rights" for all citizens as America's first goal for the next decade. He promised to present soon to Congress a special message advocating effective action through legislation along the lines suggested in the report of his committee on Civil Rights.

"The United States has always had a deep concern for human rights," the President told Congress. "Religious freedom, free speech and freedom of thought are cherished realities in our land. Any denial of human rights is a denial of the basic beliefs of democracy and of our regard for the worth of each individual. Today, however, some of our citizens are still denied equal opportunity for education, for jobs and economic advancement, and for the expression of their views at the polls. Most serious of all, some are denied equal protection under our laws. Whether discrimination is based on race, or creed, or color, or land of origin, it is utterly contrary to American ideals of democracy."

It remains to be seen whether Congress is ready to assume the responsibility of securing the civil rights for all citizens and thereby also assume moral leadership in the world by making our internal behavior exemplary, or evade all such responsibility as Congress has done in the past when it refused to approve the FEPC, anti-lynching, anti-poll tax, and anti-discrimination bills. As for the report of the President's Committee on Civil

Rights, it should be made required reading in every primary and secondary school in this country.



OF UNUSUAL interest also is the report of another presidential committee, known as the President's Commission on Higher Education, which has published during the winter months a series of six volumes under the general title "Higher Education for American Democracy." The most important of these is the volume, entitled "Equalizing and Expanding Individual opportunity," which advocates equal educational opportunity for all to the maximum of their ability and "without regard to economic status, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or ancestry."

The report condemns the discriminatory practices in our schools of higher learning and describes this practice as European in origin and therefore un-American. "Many schools and universities," says the report, "especially in their professional schools, maintain a selective quota system for admission, under which the chance to learn . . . is denied to certain minorities, particularly to Negroes and Jews. This practice is a violation of a major American principle and is contributing to the growing tension in one of the crucial areas of our democracy."

Noting the sharp decline in the number of Jewish students in the professional schools, the Commission admits that Jewish students do not have equal opportunity with non-Jews in the choice of institutions of learning and in certain fields of advanced study. Consequently, the report recommends the removal from college application forms of all questions pertaining to religion, color, and national or racial origin. It further urges "an immediate and voluntary abandonment of discriminatory practices" in our colleges and universities. We are not that naive to believe that such practices will be eliminated voluntarily, let alone immedi-

ately. There is only one way of dealing with this problem: Federal and State legislation outlawing such practices! The sooner it is done, the sooner we will have solved the problem.



FOR THOSE who may be wondering what has become of John Rankin, Mississippi's gift to the Nation, known as the most notorious anti-Semite in Congress, we hasten to add that he is carrying on in his usual demagogic style which has recently earned him the title of "expert of misinformation." He was dubbed so twice, once by Rep. John Rooney (D., N.Y.), who told Rankin that "when it comes to the subject . . . of American Jews, he is expertly misinformed, as he usually is." What brought this on was Rankin's "expert" observation in Congress that the UN decision to partition Palestine was the work of "certain alleged leaders of both parties . . . to line up certain elements in New York in the next election."

A few weeks later, Rankin engaged in a verbal encounter with Rep. Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.) and again it was started by Rankin, who made a vitriolic attack on the Jews for "dragging us into a race war in Palestine." Rankin attacked Zionism as nothing less than a "branch of the Communist movement" and referred to the United Nations as an "international Sanhedrin" which is trying to subordinate the U.S. to its domination. In his reply, Celler stated that Rankin "as usual, speaks from a wealth of lack of information." He protested the aspersion cast on the Jews of Palestine that they are all Communists, terming it a "damnable statement," and emphasized that the Jewish state in Palestine will not be a theocracy but will have complete freedom of religion. When Rankin protested the use of the word "damnable," the Speaker of the House admitted it was a bit harsh but upheld Celler's right to continue his reply. That shut Rankin up for the day.

A WORD OF PRAISE to the immigrant for his contribution to the American way of life is seldom heard in these post-war and far from peaceful days. When Assistant Secretary of Labor John W. Gibson stressed this point most emphatically in an address before a group of Jewish organizations in Washington affiliated with the Jewish Labor Committee, his words not only brought forth the cheering response of his audience but were widely quoted in the Washington press. Said Gibson:

The inflow of immigrants from countries all over the world has at various times in our history served to prevent the pattern of our life from becoming fixed. They have brought with them new ideas and a fresh viewpoint. These newcomers not only contributed to our material wealth and strength, but to our cultural life, to our mode of community living, and to the extension of our democratic institutions. Each had a great purpose in coming here—to gain political freedom, religious freedom, intellectual freedom, economic freedom, freedom of conscience or thought. Each of these great ambitions has become a part of our heritage.

At this point it was natural for Gibson to make a strong plea on behalf of the Stratton bill to admit 400,000 displaced persons into the United States. He urged that we extend an offer of new hope to these people "many of whom landed in concentration camps because they refused to compromise their trade union and democratic principles," and pointed out that America stands to benefit in prestige, honor, self-respect, and in material gains by offering freedom and safety to these new immigrants. It is most encouraging to know that there are high public officials who speak their mind freely and are not taken in by the current hysteria and propaganda against everything that is of immigrant origin.



HERE IS THE CASE of an immigrant of whom this country can be justly proud.

We refer to Prof. William Haber of the University of Michigan, who was named some weeks ago to replace Judge Louis E. Levinthal as adviser on Jewish Affairs to the U.S. military commanders of the American zones in Germany and Austria. Dr. Haber, who is 49 years old, was born in Roumania and was brought to this country by his parents at the age of 10. He studied at the University of Wisconsin, where he later remained to teach economics. In 1936, he became professor of economics at Michigan and has retained that position until now.

Dr. Haber is regarded as one of the outstanding economists of this country. Under the Roosevelt Administration he served as consultant and expert for the U. S. Social Security Board and other government agencies. He is the author of numerous books and articles dealing with the problems of unemployment and industrial relations. Nevertheless, he has for many years retained a deep interest in various aspects of Jewish life in the United States and abroad. During the years 1939-1941 he served as executive director of the National Refugee Service, later incorporated into the organization known as United Service for New Americans, which aids newly-arriving Jewish immigrants to establish themselves economically in their new surroundings.

This writer had the good fortune of meeting Dr. Haber a little over a year ago at a meeting of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Commission in Washington to which he had been named at the time. The Commission is the governing body of all Hillel foundations and councilorships established on some 175 American campuses. Dr. Haber is taking a leave of absence from the university until next September. He should make an excellent adviser on Jewish affairs. His vast knowledge and experience will undoubtedly prove of great benefit to the 200,000 Jews—mostly displaced persons—in those countries.

THE PALESTINE SITUATION continues to retain a prominent place on the agenda in Washington. State Department officials are supporting the views of the British Colonial Office, as they have done in the past on this and other matters. They seem to be doing everything in their power to make the issue as confused as possible in the hope that the U.S. will reverse itself on the decision to partition the little country and establish a Jewish state in a part of it. Most of this anti-Zionist propaganda centers around Russian diplomacy in the Middle East. State Department officials are puzzled by Russia's support of the Palestine partition plan and are ascribing sinister and hidden motives to it.

Headed by anti-Zionist L. W. Henderson, these officials are scrutinizing and studying Russia's action in the case of Palestine and to this end they are being aided by London, which is supplying useful clues, "planting" wild rumors in the press about Jewish Communists infiltrating Palestine, and disseminating exaggerated stories about "anti-American" feeling in the Arab countries. All of this has led our State Department officials to analyze the situation in the following manner:

1. Russia is anxious to see the end of the British Mandate over Palestine and the withdrawal of British troops from there as soon as possible.
2. Russia desires an intensification of the conflict in the Middle East in order to make it impossible for Britain and the U.S. to develop their oil concessions in the Arab countries.
3. Russia wishes to perpetuate the chaos in the Middle East which began after the UN decision on Palestine. The best way to accomplish this is through support of the Jews, who are a minority in the Arab world.
4. Russia hopes to convince the Arabs that the U.S. has imperialist designs on

the Middle East, and through its officials, its money, and eventually its troops in Palestine and elsewhere the U.S. will establish its control over the Arab countries.

5. Russia desires to substantiate the principle of partition as a way of solution in the countries located on the periphery of Russian influence, such as Iran, Turkey, Greece, in order to gain complete control over them later.

6. The continued Arab-Jewish clashes in Palestine will serve as a pretext for Russia to bring the matter before the UN Security Council on the ground it is endangering world peace. In the Council, Russia will insist that Soviet troops be included in the international police force to be stationed in Palestine and in this way she will gain a foothold there.

7. Free Jewish immigration to Palestine will enable specially-trained Communist agents from Eastern Europe to enter the country as immigrants.

This is the current trend of thinking among State Department officials on Palestine and such is the picture they draw for us. Needless to add that it is a picture of utter confusion and lack of understanding of the true situation in and around Palestine. Our officials prefer to support medieval Arab feudalism and Arab Nazi collaborators as against the true democratic spirit brought to the Middle East by the Jews of Palestine. The worst mistake these officials are making is to believe that the Arabs will form a bulwark against Communism and will help the Anglo-Americans protect their oil reserves in the Middle East. It is enough to see how the Arab countries behaved during the recent war to know that we are deluding ourselves in such beliefs. Stringing along on the tail of the toothless and emaciated British lion will some day leave us holding nothing more than a malodorous tail.



# West Coast Letter

By CAREY McWILLIAMS

FOR OVER A DECADE, now, the fashionable winter resorts in Arizona have been using anti-Semitism as a form of advertising with the usual specifications of "restricted clientele" and similar phrases. Not so long ago the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce adopted a resolution in which the resort owners, all members of the body, agreed to drop these discriminatory specifications from their advertising and, presumably, to change their policies accordingly. Shortly after the resolution was adopted, however, the old specifications began to reappear in the ads of the more fashionable resorts. Each time the ads have appeared the resort owners have been questioned and on each questioning they have pleaded "inadvertence." But they appear to be chronically inadvertent, for, despite the protests and the recantations, the same policies are pursued. These policies are important, of course, because they reflect the prejudices of those who patronize these swank establishments, notably the Camel-Back Inn and the Wigwam. Similar discrimination has been on the increase for some years in the dude-ranch resorts and in some of the winter sports resorts in the western states. The matter is of sufficient importance to merit a systematic investigation by some such organization as the Anti-Defamation League. While the pat-

tern is not so clear, it is also apparent that considerable anti-Semitism exists in some of the Southern California beach communities such as Laguna Beach, La Jolla, and Santa Barbara. During the war, the publisher of the leading newspaper in Santa Barbara published a front-page editorial warning "certain refugees" that they have exhausted the hospitality of the community. This editorial, moreover, was not wholly unrelated to other manifestations of anti-Semitism in this distinctly upper-class community. With a population of approximately 40,000, it is rather interesting to note that, so far as I have been able to determine, there are no Jewish professional men in practice in Santa Barbara. When Jews have attempted to establish themselves in the professions, the organized professional groups have quickly closed ranks and in effect excluded them from the community. But a recent development at the University of California at Santa Barbara (formerly Santa Barbara State College) shows that a new ferment has begun to make itself felt in the community.

In November a group of students at the college undertook to sponsor an amendment to the constitution of the Associated Students which, if enacted, would have barred from the campus any organization which restricted its membership

on the basis of race, religion, or color. The amendment was aimed, of course, specifically at the fraternities. *El Gaucho*, the student publication, in its issue of November 11, contained an interesting summary of the arguments for and against the measure. In a popular vote, a majority of the students voted down the proposal but I am told that the sponsors were encouraged by the size of the "pro" vote and will raise the issue again in the future. On a lecture trip through the east and middle west in November and December, I was interested to note that somewhat similar movements are now shaping up on a number of university and college campuses, notably at the University of Minnesota. In a number of cases, the local campus affiliate of the American Veterans Committee has been responsible for setting these movements in motion. The students at Santa Barbara should not be discouraged, therefore, by this first effort to end discrimination on the campus. For two years now a minority of the Los Angeles Bar Association has sponsored a proposed amendment which, if adopted, would have opened membership in that most august body to Negro lawyers. On both occasions, the measure has been defeated by the membership but by a smaller margin of votes in each instance.

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**I**N A RECENT CHAT with Milton A. Senn, who has been in charge of the Southern California Regional Office of the Anti-Defamation League since September 1st, 1947, I was told that the Rev. Wesley Swift, long active in KKK circles in Southern California, is nowadays energetically reorganizing the Klan under various fancy guises. One of the masks behind which the KKK functions today, —believe it or not,—is the Order of Ru-Ha-Mah, supposedly an "American Indian" organization, known also as the Militant American Patriots. Still another

camouflaged Klan group is The Great Pyramid Club, organized by Swift on the basis of a secret fraternal organization. A third Swift promotion is the Anglo-Saxon Congregation which meets every Sunday at 3 p. m. in the Friday Morning Club in Los Angeles (this group was formed in December). One of Swift's colleagues, James King, has formed a group called The Mohicans which uses the tomahawk as a lodge symbol and calls its various chapters "tepees." That Swift and his colleagues should have been driven to the necessity of adopting the protective mantle of the American Indian is, perhaps, some evidence of the resistance which they have encountered. On the other hand it is also apparent that these organizations have been making some headway; that their membership is on the increase; and, most important of all, that they have begun to recruit members from the middle class.

Among the activities which Mr. Senn has initiated since coming to Los Angeles (incidentally he is a former Chicagoan) is an interesting program in training leadership. From the thirty-five or forty chapters of the B'Nai B'Rith in the area, a group of women have been selected for a special seminar in community relations. Selected on the basis of their interest in better community relations, these women participate in some ten or twelve seminars in community relations where such topics as "Why We Have Prejudice" and "How Prejudice is Kept Alive" are discussed by social scientists recruited from the local universities. The program, of course, is not primarily aimed at the education of those who attend but rather at stimulating these individuals to assume important leadership roles in community relations in the sections of the city in which they reside. Careful plans have been made to verify the results of the program, after the conclusion of the course, in terms of what, if any, new leadership the trainees assert.

RECENTLY JUDGE STANLEY MOSK, an outstanding leader in the Jewish community in Los Angeles, ruled that court enforcement of restrictive covenants violated the Fourteenth Amendment. This is the second decision by a judge of the Superior Court in Los Angeles refusing to enforce covenants of this sort (Judge Thurmond Clarke made a similar ruling last year). In making his ruling, Judge Mosk dismissed the action which had been brought, ironically enough, by a white Presbyterian minister to oust a Negro army Major, a Purple Heart veteran of World Wars I and II, and two other Negro families from their homes. What Judge Mosk had to say in dismissing the action is, I believe, of real importance:

There is no allegation and no suggestion that any of these defendants would not be law abiding neighbors and citizens of the community. The only objection to them is their color and race.

We read columns in the press each day about un-American activities. This court feels that there is no more reprehensible un-American activity than to attempt to deprive persons of their own homes on a 'Master Race' theory.

Our nation has just fought a war against the Nazi race superiority theory. One of these defendants was in that war and is a Purple Heart veteran. This court would indeed be callous to his constitutional rights, if it were to permit him to be ousted from his own home by using 'race' as the measure of his worth as a citizen and neighbor.

Judge Mosk, who got his training in the law at the University of Chicago, was appointed to the Superior Court bench some years ago by Governor Culbert L. Olson and was elected for a regular term when the period of his appointment expired. Those who know him will be pleased but certainly not surprised by the courage which this decision reflected.

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AN ITEM FROM MEXICO merits recording in this letter. Back in 1945 the Synarchist movement, then claiming a membership of about 500,000, split into two

almost evenly divided factions; those who believed in political action and those who insisted that the mission of the movement was primarily educational. The political group, directed by Torres Bueno, founded a weekly newspaper, *Orden*, and a political party, *Fuerza Popular*, and succeeded in electing a member to the national Congress. At a meeting in Mexico City in October, the "educationalists" elected to re-unite with the political action group. Two former national leaders, Manuel Serramento, chief of the movement from 1938 to 1940, and Salvador Abascal, who held the same office from 1940 to 1941, returned to the main group and are now prominently identified with its activities. While it remains to be seen how effective and durable the new unity will be, it is worth noting that Luis Martinez Nartezo, the new national "chief," has announced that the movement has finally overcome its fatal tendency "to fall apart after every fight." Those familiar with the background and activities of the movement will regard these developments with some apprehension. Prior to the 1945 split, the movement had some 2,500 members in Southern California and was fairly well organized in a score of Mexican-American communities.

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ON THURSDAY EVENING, January 15, the Commission on Community Interrelations of the American Jewish Congress in Southern California made its first award for outstanding work in the field of community interrelations in Los Angeles. The award was made to Police Officer Michael ("Mickey") Finn of the Los Angeles force. A few evenings prior to this date, the Community Council had given its similar award to Joseph Scott, a well-known Catholic lawyer. For a number of reasons which I had best not mention, it seems to me that the award to Officer Finn was by far the more appropriate of the two awards.

Officer "Mickey" Finn is quite a character. He comes of a long line of Irish-American police officers: both his father and his two grandfathers were members of the force. Mickey has been on the Los Angeles force for only two years, having spent six years in the army. He is twenty-five years old, unmarried, a big, handsome, garrulous fellow and that rarity among Irish-Americans, a Baptist. When he joined the force, he was assigned to a North Broadway beat in Los Angeles, an area long known for its memorable and complicated gang wars. Acting on his own initiative, he began to form Mickey Finn Clubs in which he was successful in enrolling many youngsters that business men in the area had urged him to arrest or "to ride out" of the district as "dangerous characters." Today some 500 youngsters are enrolled in these clubs. The "clubroom" is an abandoned police station in the district. Enrolled in the clubs are all varieties of racial, ethnic, religious, and nationality groups: Chinese, Filipinos, Italians, Japanese, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans. The clubs have produced a prize-winning football team, equipped with helmets, shoulder-pads, and uniforms discarded by the Los Angeles high schools. Most of the youngsters in the clubs are on probation from the Juvenile Court for the commission of various offenses. Through the generosity of Eddie Albert and his wife Margo, the actress, Officer Finn is now able to show motion pictures in the clubroom one night each week. He also has a boat—donated by the Alberts—on which he takes the members of his Marine Club on cruises to Catalina Island. The boys have their own form of self-government and a system of "courts" in which they place on trial and punish those members who commit offenses against the club rules. When one realizes that all this activity stems from the interest and imagination of one man, acting on his own initiative, it is apparent that the award was richly de-

served and that the American Jewish Congress is to be congratulated on selecting Finn to receive its first award.

Recently the Congress has launched a movement which may develop into something quite important. Early in December, 1947, the leaders of the Congress—Judge Ben Rosenthal, Mrs. Fred Pollock, William Strong, and others—called together the leaders of the three largest minority groups in Los Angeles: Mexicans, Negroes, and Jews, in the order named. At this preliminary meeting, it was suggested that the three minorities should have a more intimate knowledge of the special problems faced by each group and that they should act in unison on matters of joint interest and importance. Hence it was suggested that, for once, the minorities might act on their own steam and initiative and that, if they did so, they would not be bound or confined by delicate considerations of "unity" which usually prevail when minority leaders are summoned to confer with representatives of majority elements. Of thirty Negro leaders invited, twenty-eight were present. The Mexican community was also fairly well represented. At the conclusion of the meeting, those present decided to call a minority conference—for minority representatives only—in February. It was decided, also, that as a token indication of the interest which each group professed to have in the others, pledges against anti-Semitism would be taken in the Negro community while specific pledges would be taken by the members of the Jewish organizations against restrictive covenants and other measures of vital interest to the Negro and Mexican communities. The February conference will be called by individuals, not by organizations, so as to make it possible for those attending to discuss the possibility of political action on matters in which the minorities are vitally interested.

Today there are approximately 380,000



Mexican-Americans in the Los Angeles area; around 250,000 Negroes; and 200,000 Jews. For the three major minority groups, therefore, the total would be close to a million. Assuming that it would be possible to get joint political action from these groups on such issues as fair employment practices, the political balance of power in the state and in the community could unquestionably be shifted. Acting together these three groups alone could have a clear veto on issues and candidates in Los Angeles and might elect a mayor and perhaps a majority of the council. A dominant theme at the pre-

liminary meeting, echoed by most of the speakers, was that the minorities should take political action on matters of common interest; that "unity councils" had a valuable function but that this function was limited and needed to be supplemented by more forceful and pertinent organization; and that the groups represented were a little weary of being forever summoned to conferences by their allies in the Anglo-American community. It remains to be seen, of course, how the movement will develop but it is apparent that it does have possibilities, given wise leadership and intelligent direction.

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*"Among the civilized races of the world, the Jewish people are at once the best and the least known. It is one of the tragic peculiarities of their fate that they could never be ignored, and have thus been constantly obliged to face the criticisms of the rest of the world—their non-Jewish environment—and stand or fall by it. Various attempts have been made, from time to time, to correct the inaccuracies which have crept into the Gentile portraits of the Jew . . . But they served no useful purpose. For a people as intensely vital as the Jews stand in no need of an apologia. On the contrary, they require above all to be constantly reminded of their true nature, so that they may never be in danger of forgetting the stupendous responsibilities which have been imposed upon them on this earth."*

JOSEPH KASTEIN, *History and Destiny of the Jews*

# BOOKS

*To Secure These Rights.* The Report of the Committee on Civil Rights. Simon & Schuster. 178 pp. \$1.00.

Issuing government reports is often an expedient substitute for difficult governmental action. When faced on one side with a strong demand for social progress and on the other with strong reactionary opposition, a government often (especially before an important election) seizes the opportunity of quieting one with a strong report and the other with weak action.

President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights has given us a fairly strong report. It has chosen to find four basic rights:

1. "The right to safety and security of the person."
2. "The right to citizenship and its privileges."
3. "The right to freedom of conscience and expression."
4. "The right to equality of opportunity."

Despite recent progress, the Committee finds serious infringements of all rights and recommends generally the legal remedies which progressive organizations have long urged. Are there restrictive covenants? Outlaw them! Do Southern whites lynch Negroes? Pass an anti-lynching law. Is citizenship denied to Guamians? Grant it. For every catalogued wrong, the Committee gives a specific remedy; and it has prepared a full and valuable catalogue of wrongs, with special emphasis on racial and religious discrimination and unfairness. After a dramatic summary of racial discriminations in the national capital, the Committee says that "the national government of the United States must (for "must" read "should") take the lead in safeguarding the civil rights of all Americans."

Naturally, the Committee could not avoid dealing with the current loyalty probe. Conceding a "need" for the federal government to use security police agen-

cies to check the loyalty of all federal employees, the Committee deplores two dangers. One is that standards of loyalty may not be clearly defined, and the other that the procedure may not accord with traditions of due process. However, once the Committee admits that "security police" may shadow every stock clerk, it necessarily concedes that the sources for knowing disloyalty must remain oracular. In a masterpiece of understatement, the Committee finally says that "a state of near-hysteria now threatens to inhibit the freedom of genuine democrats." It has inhibited even the Committee.

Not one word about the slashing of the civil rights of organized labor. No mention of the Taft-Hartley agglomeration passed to limit the right to organize and bargain collectively. In the United States, a strong and growing labor movement has always advanced social progress and increased civil rights. A successful attack on organized labor destroys civil rights not only directly but also by weakening their most effective champions.

The committee does not mention the maze of election laws which throttle the growth of new political parties. Perhaps the Committee believed that a citizen who wishes to exercise his right to vote in a non-Republican-Democratic party circle should be hardy enough to clear his way through the existing electoral tangle in most states.

Will the Committee recommendations become law? Certainly, appropriate bills will appear on the calendars. But does anyone believe that in the Eightieth Congress, the new Senator from Mississippi, or the gentlemen from South Carolina will conclude that the country "can no longer countenance these burdens on its common conscience," and will refrain from filibustering to death any one of the following Committee recommendations:

An anti-lynching bill;

A bill to end poll taxes;

Bills to eliminate racial segregation;

A Fair Employment Practice bill; or similar measures?

The Report is an important marker. It points ahead to the goal, just as the Report of the United States Commission on Industrial Relations in 1915 marked the road to the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. In assessing the implications of the Report, the careful reader may not only admire the Committee's stirring rhetoric, but also mark down the Committee's own warning:

"There are social and psychological conditions which foster civil rights; there are others which imperil them."

LEON M. DESPRES

*The Creative Critic*, by Carl H. Grabo, Chicago, University of Chicago Press. 160 pp. \$3.00.

Professor Carl H. Grabo last year reached an age when teachers at the University of Chicago, where he has taught for many years, customarily retire. In at least some instances, the retirement rule seems reasonable enough. At sixty-five, quite a few professors who have coped with younger generations and with scholarly problems during several decades, understandably are pretty badly winded. They are glad, therefore, to leave their posts and to rest as comfortably as possible on whatever laurels they have managed to accumulate. Carl Grabo, however, has made the rule seem a little silly. As young instructors who have battled him on the Quadrangle Club courts will ruefully testify, he plays as wicked a game of tennis as ever. As recent students will testify, his mind is as sharp and his thinking as clear as those of any younger teachers. And he has celebrated his first year of retirement by (a) teaching in a university in the Southwest, (b) writing the first draft of a new novel, and (c) publishing this challenging new book of criticism.

The book, like most critical studies, is revelatory of the personality which produced it. It is shaped by the wisdom its author has gained by teaching and by writing poetry, fiction, and scholarly studies. The tolerance which he has cultivated during his long career enriches the book. So too does the fresh way of

looking at literature and at life which we have come to expect of him.

The spirit and the main theme of the book are evident in this statement in its early pages:

It is the purpose of this essay to sketch a philosophy designed to stimulate literary evolution along productive lines; to expedite a process which social and other forces would more blindly and more wastefully achieve and far less rapidly. The philosophy itself need not be heavily argued or defended, though it can be. By its own essential character it makes no claim to finality. Its very assumption is that from the nature of things, from the constitution of the universe and the mind of man himself, there is no absolute finality. It assumes that life and mind forever expand and grow, that without an end there is only a directive which is supplied by the universe itself and the history of its evolution. Other philosophies, assumptions, and hypotheses may fruitfully supplement it. Its one dogmatic assumption is that our universe is endlessly changing and that mankind can in the degree of its awareness and the mastery of means consciously direct the process. It assumes that this conscious direction can enlarge its scope with the exercise of power. It sets no limit to the extent to which the human mind may ultimately control, shape, and direct the universe in which it finds itself.

The concern of the study, in other words, is with the power of the artist or the author to make his work assist human progress. The study attempts to perform what Grabo believes is the creative task of the critic—to provide "stimulus . . . for original works, . . . to disseminate ideas." "Here," says Grabo, "is a world which must unite or perish, which must achieve social justice or dissolve in anarchy and chaos. It must learn the folly of its silly hates and prejudices. It must learn to like and to respect alien peoples whose traditions and ways of life are foreign to its own. How, save through an enlightened press, a progressive school system, and a vigorous creative art, can it hope to solve the problems which confront it?" This book offers suggestions to critics and artists about the ways in which they may do their share.

Here, for instance, are some of Grabo's remarks about experimental fiction as a destroyer of social bigotry:

Fiction has hardly scratched the surface of the field offered it by the intermarriage of peoples and races. The fictional possibilities are immense, with vastly interesting problems incident in the clash of cultural traditions when men and women of radically diverse origins marry. The marriage of white and black, white

and yellow, of the inheritors of the Manchus and the descendants of the Incas—what exciting fields are these for the novelist exploring the possibilities of human nature and how helpful may not his findings be. These fictional experiments aid the social process itself, allaying prejudices and arousing understanding and sympathy. Only as we learn these will the world become a more tolerant and more interesting place in which to live. The future imaginatively preconceived is more readily understood when it becomes reality. It is only as our imaginations are enlarged that we avoid needless antagonisms and frictions in our human relationships.

Limitations of space of course prevent an adequate summary here of the other ideas developed by Professor Grabo under this heading. But it may be said that, basing his comments upon the natural sciences, social science, and literary history, he makes stimulating suggestions to what one may hope will be the creative critic and the creative artist of the future.

The final chapter—part of which recently appeared in this magazine—offers one of the most interesting suggestions of all. The forces of conventional criticism and art, Grabo notes, combine with the economic urge to keep writers from creating experimental and socially valuable works of the sort here advocated. How, then, he asks, can their publication be stimulated? He suggests that some man "of wealth and vision" set up a foundation to subsidize any worthy book which publishers fear may not sell very well. He imagines the foundation saying to the publisher: "Before you return this manuscript let us see it. If we think its publication desirable we will insure you against loss. Go ahead and publish the book, giving the author his usual royalty. He need know nothing of our connection with the matter. If the sale of the book repays the cost of publication, we pay you nothing. . . . If the sale repays you but half your costs, we will make up the deficit. You have lost nothing and risked nothing. Further, you have gained in prestige if not in money; for the book you have published has done credit to your house. . . . If the book earns a profit, all is yours." The suggestion, original though it is, has much to recommend it.

The book ends on a characteristic note:

As for highly intelligent, farseeing, and socially minded millionaires seeking projects to endow, there are none of my acquaintance. Yet, if the ideas I have expressed are not merely fantastic and visionary, they will not be wholly sterile. Either they or others similar, contributed

by someone else, will lead to action. No one should ask for more than a hearing for his thoughts. They must then live or die as they have strength to do. The literary foundation proposed has no further end than to do just that: to further the publication of ideas and to minimize . . . the waste of talent, artistic skill, and original thought which is evident in our crude and but partly civilized society.

The lack of dogmatism which this passage typifies makes this rich book doubly persuasive.

WALTER BLAIR

*Cooperative Palestine—The Story of Histadrut*, by Samuel Kurland. Sharon Books. 276 pp. \$3.00.

*Labor Enterprise in Palestine*, by Gerhard Muenzner. Sharon Books. 83 pp. \$1.50.

Much has been said and written about different aspects of the present-day miracle in the Holy Land. In *Cooperative Palestine* we are given the full account of this phenomenon: it becomes largely the "Story of the Histadrut." The author has told quite fully the background and the beginning of this unique organization, a national "union" and at the same time the country's largest employer, a State within a State, but always and primarily dedicated to its fundamental goal, the realization of Zionism.

Modern Palestine may be said to begin in 1920, when 87 delegates representing 4,333 Jewish workers in that little country met in Haifa and formed the Histadrut, the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine. Today its membership consists of 175,000 workers, who with their dependents number about 260,000 persons, about 40% of the entire Jewish population in Palestine. The stated purpose of the Histadrut was to unite "all workers who subsist on earnings of their own work and who do not exploit the labor of others, in order to provide for all communal, economic, and cultural matters relating to the working class in Palestine, with a view to the establishment of a Jewish laboring community in this country." All workers, manual and white-collar, urban and rural, belong there, in the common purpose of "reconstruction of the nation." It is this larger goal which is the key to this unusual institution, a "union" which wants more and more immigration; a national organization, operating on the cooperative principle, which looks after the "profes-



sional, cultural, educational, and economic" interests of all workers.

To accomplish these objectives it had to develop an organized body of Jewish workers schooled in the most modern methods of production; it had to create new forms of agrarian collective organizations and settlements, even in the Negev—and particularly there. All this was accomplished essentially without the assistance of the Mandatory Power, Great Britain; indeed, frequently over its opposition. At the same time the Histadrut, although not a government, was foremost in organizing all forms of social security for its members and their families. It tried to make life more secure; it tried also to make it richer. It brought to Palestine a new Hebraic culture—schools and newspapers and musical institutions. It did not neglect physical culture, either. Nor did it forget to work for Arab-Jewish cooperation; the Histadrut even publishes an Arab labor newspaper in Jerusalem.

Everything was done and created as part of the main task, the building of a model cooperative economy in Palestine. To that end the Histadrut developed agrarian and consumer cooperatives; specialized organizations for building and housing construction; many service organizations, like the national transport cooperatives; marine industries, including a fishing fleet; and its own banking, insurance, and credit institutions; and much else besides that cannot be listed in a review.

The world is in desperate need of a living model for a better, a more humane society. After reading Dr. Kurland's work one may truly believe that a people in exile these last nineteen centuries are now serving mankind well in working out such a society, while reestablishing their national home. The author has effectively presented this remarkable achievement, with becoming pride and simple dignity.

The companion little book, *Labor Enterprise in Palestine*, by Dr. Gerhard Muenzner, is a factual and statistical presentation of Histadrut economic institutions, making available a wealth of precise information to all who may be interested in it. It is a credit to the Histadrut to have collected so much valuable data, and to the author for having organized the material so well for permanent reference and usefulness.

PAUL G. ANNES

*And Call It Peace*, by Marshall Knappen. University of Chicago Press. 213 pp. \$3.00.

Professor Marshall Knappen, who served as a Lieutenant Colonel in the occupational forces in Germany, appeals in this book to the American people to demand of their representatives a change in our German policy, which in its denazification program has largely failed. The will of the people can prevail if it is sufficiently informed and determined. "That," Professor Knappen writes, "was the opinion of the members of our Political Division in Berlin, nearly all State Department Employees with pre-war experience in Germany, who were on loan to military government. . . . The American people are great faddists. The fad that will hold their attention longest is winning a war. When that is done, they lose interest. Just now the fad is that thorough denazification will end the job here, and so the folks at home can forget this business and turn to planning for a new car or a new house. But if they ever get serious about things over here again, they can do anything they like."

Will they ever become serious? Unless the threat of another war becomes sufficiently great and the importance of Germany to a new military alignment sufficiently obvious it seems improbable. We are a people who can rise to the crisis of a war, but we remain in spirit isolationists, desiring nothing but to be left alone, and contemptuous of all other nations for their inability to maintain themselves in economic security and peace. Professor Knappen is as one crying in a wilderness, unlikely to catch the public ear and lead us to change our ways. Nevertheless we should learn what we can of the causes for our failure. These lie very largely in the nature of the military mind, its ignorance, stupidity, and callousness.

An army of occupation needs a thorough indoctrination, education in the ways of behavior, and a stern discipline. These our army did not have. Excerpts from Professor Knappen's book give us only too clear a picture:

Except for an occasional half hearted circular on the subject of black market activities or more zeal in saluting, those in authority showed little evidence of being concerned with the problem. The general attitude seemed to be: "The boys had a rough time. We held them in check when we were in Allied countries. Now that we are

in conquered enemy territory, let them enjoy themselves. . . .

The attitude that all Krauts are alike, and none to be trusted . . . of course afforded a very convenient rationalization for a wide variety of misconduct on the part of officers and men alike. Black market activities, particularly in Berlin, were so flagrant that the best solution the authorities could provide was an announced open season on the unlimited transmission of funds home, after which the rules were to be obeyed. Stories of men sending home thousands of dollars were common. One lieutenant was reported to have cleared \$120,000 in his first few weeks in Berlin. The lack of any close inspection of packages mailed home encouraged wholesale looting. . . .

Our billeting policy was equally indiscriminate. Most German civilians expected we would secure necessary office and housing space by evicting Nazi party members, or would at least spare those with known anti-Nazi records. The common practice was, however, to take the most conveniently located buildings, regardless of the character of their occupants. . . . The finding of alternative accommodations was exclusively a German problem. 'Sir, we can fight men. But, we didn't think we came here to do this,' said some boys from the Second Armored Division who were given the task of driving women and children out of their Berlin homes onto the street. One wave of evictions in the United States sector of Berlin brought one hundred and forty-two suicides in three days.

The best-fed army in the world, living in the midst of mass malnutrition, naturally developed a callous attitude on the food question. . . . But what shocked the Germans the most was the conspicuous waste in the Army messes of quantities of food which would have meant the difference between life and death to many civilians. They remembered Goebbels' statements that democracy is a system in which a favored few feast while thousands starve in the midst of plenty. . . .

The coming of young replacements to relieve the combat troops did not improve the situation. Many of these youngsters, not having been in battle were anxious to demonstrate their toughness. Some did so by beating up the first Germans they saw when they went off duty at night. Others, not having seen anything else of the adult world, accepted the suggestions of old Army sergeants on matters of personal conduct as being standard operation procedure for all soldiers. In the summer of 1946 the rate of infection with venereal disease among our troops in Germany was 30 per cent per year, an all-time record.

These citations sufficiently explain the failure of our denazification program. The best efforts of the trained personnel of educators drawn from civilian life into the army to carry out a reeducation pro-

gram were largely futile in the face of such conduct by our troops. Our actions were more persuasive than our professions. The army had little knowledge or care for the distinctions between Nazi and anti-Nazi. It was not sufficiently intelligent to perceive the necessity of building good will among those many Germans who hated Hitler and his works and who wished to reeducate their people in the ways of democracy. The ways of our democracy as evidenced in our occupation offered small encouragement.

Back of the Army's conduct lay, of course, the uncertain policy of the home administration, which vacillated between the humane policy set forth in the Atlantic Charter and the tough Morgenthau plan. We have been torn alternately between vengeance and an uncertain faith in the Christian doctrines which we profess. It is only as the national conscience is aroused and manifests itself in political pressure that something may be done to ameliorate the evils for which we are responsible.

Much of the evil and failure which Professor Knappen's book only too vividly reveals lies in the militarism which is a growing cancer in the body politic. Already public opinion senses uneasily the threat to our traditional democratic dogma and practice resident in universal conscription, in military budgets that consume a third of the annual income, and in the increasing arrogance of the military mind. Professor Knappen has some pertinent comments upon the brass hats and upon the education and the system which make them what they are.

'The trouble with us West Pointers,' said one of them who served with me, 'is that we are the sons of the second-rate politicians who can't afford to pay for their children's college education. The really important politicians get straight jobs when their side wins. Those who don't rate that high are paid off with lesser pickings like cadetships. . . .'

Once in the Point the future generals, as is well known, receive a quasi-engineering education, largely consisting of rote memory work, not designed to encourage independent thinking or initiative. Instructors are not infrequently Academy graduates called from field service for a short period of teaching. Civilian instructors with previous experience in ordinary universities who have served at the Academy report the level of intellectual life there is most discouraging. While history is taught, the emphasis is on memorizing facts. Until recently economics, political science, and other social science fields

were generally neglected. No courses whatever in military government were offered prior to 1941.

Men so inadequately trained move into the rigid military machine, where to display initiative and independence is to endanger their careers. They are taught to obey and not to question authority. They jockey for promotion and bring what political influence they can to bear upon those who can dispense favors. These are the men who will administer our occupational forces in many places over the earth. If we are headed for other and more desperate wars, as is not improbable, we may occupy even more of the earth than now. Unless we educate a kind of military administrator very different from the one we have so far produced, it seems probable that we shall stir the hatred of every nation and race with which we come into contact. Our imperial domination—whatever name we give to it—will not last very long in the face of universal detestation. Also in the support of a militarism justified on the ground of our national security, most of our democratic practices and beliefs will fall into desuetude. Is this hysteria? On the record to which Professor Knappen's book bears witness the threat to our democracy is a sober reality. The military mind has no understanding of democracy.

CARL GRABO

*A History of the Jews*, by Solomon Grayzel, The Jewish Publication Society of America. 805 pp. \$3.50.

This interesting, well written book, tells the story of the Jews from the Babylonian Exile in 586 B. C. to the present day, and tells it in easy-flowing language without much rhetoric, but in a dignified, convincing manner.

At the beginning we follow the Jews through their early periods of cultural developments from the days when they were living in peaceful surroundings, through periods of trouble, distress, and martyrdom in Palestine, in Babylon, in Egypt. It never seems to matter much in what country they settled, their trials and tribulations would sooner or later be the same. Yet great names constantly appear on the pages of their history, a tribute to the innate quality and stature of the people.

So long as the abode of the Jews was restricted to what we now call the Near-East, the thread of the narrative remains

comparatively simple. The difficulties of the author begin when, after the Roman conquest of Jerusalem, the Israelites were scattered to all parts of the globe. One cannot help admire the skill with which Dr. Grayzel has succeeded in covering so wide a range of simultaneous events within the scope of one volume; for fate threw the Jews not only into Spain, England, Russia, and the rest of Europe, but they soon settled also in America, Africa, and even far-off China. How they managed to survive, how they kept up a liaison with each other under almost impossible handicaps, is colorfully set forth. The restraint which the author has used throughout, even when one would condone some kind of an outburst, is a tribute to the scientific spirit which pervades the book from cover to cover.

Dr. Grayzel, a teacher of Jewish History at Graetz College in Philadelphia, has wisely broken up his immense thesis into small fragments, which can be readily digested, but which, nevertheless, are skilfully woven into an integral entity. Numerous illustrations, all well chosen, add to the interest of this volume, which can be sincerely recommended not only to Jews, but to non-Jews as well. Those who peruse it will find themselves richly repaid, for the *History of the Jews* is a veritable gold mine of instructive, intriguing, and sometimes amazingly dramatic episodes which cannot help to leave a lasting impression on the reader's mind.

OTTO EISENSCHIML

*Blessed Is The Match*, by Marie Syrkin. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 361 pp. \$3.50. (Also issued by The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia.)

In certain sections of London I could notice anti-Semitic scribbblings on house walls as late as April 1940. "This is the Jews' war—let them fight!" they read. Fortunately, there were not many dopes who would believe that nonsense, spread by the Mosleyites. Yet the notion did persist, among the bigoted, that not only was the Hitler menace reserved for Jews but that the Jews were getting everyone else to do their fighting. Even well-meaning people were sorely troubled with the question of why, for heaven's sake, did six million Jews permit themselves to be slaughtered like so many head of cattle without even putting up a fight.

Miss Syrkin offers ample evidence to refute the fantasy that Europe's Jews died the death of cowards (if one can talk of cowardice where there are a score of superbly armed SS-men versus one unarmed civilian). Yet *Blessed Is The Match* is not an apology, rather a monument erected in memory to the dead, and an exhortation to future generations. Nor did the author attempt to cover the entire field of Jewish participation in World War II, which included the service of a million men and women of Jewish extraction in the various Allied armies. She was mainly interested in obtaining firsthand information on the contemporary version of young David's fight against the mechanized Goliath of the Philistines. The author gleaned it from such fighters and eyewitnesses as she could get hold of in Europe's camps of Displaced Persons and in Palestine's agricultural settlements. This knowledge she wove into a flag, strange and sad to behold, yet outshining the grim swastika that was Europe's dire symbol between 1939 and 1945.

New light is being shed on the Palestinian parachutists who established contact with the anti-Nazi underground; one of them who was executed by the Nazis was young and beautiful Hanna Senesch, author of the poem that inspired the present book's title. "Is it worth risking your life for an idealistic impulse?" her mother asked her. Hanna, then a prisoner already doomed to die, replied: "For me it is worth while." Realistic idealists like Hanna were among the leaders of the revolt in the ghetto of Warsaw, the Jewish partisans who struck at the Germans from the wild woods in Eastern Europe, and the Organization Juive de Combat, the Jewish section of the French maquis. However different their backgrounds, they believed that it was more honorable to seek certain death on the battlefield than meekly to wait for the slaughterer.

Miss Syrkin duly underscores the fact that a majority of the Jewish resistance leaders were Zionists, especially Labor Zionists. Does emphasis on an established fact turn the volume into a piece of propaganda, as certain anti-Zionist reviewers have asserted? If so, the sober Report on Palestine by the United Nations Inquiry Committee, praising the "magnitude" and "remarkable feats" of Jewish labor in the Holy Land is sheer Zionist propaganda, too. Nobody can deny that

Jewish resistance to Nazism came primarily from Zionist circles, especially in Eastern Europe. Nor can the fact be ignored that a very large percentage of Europe's surviving Jews wish to leave a continent which, in Miss Syrkin's words, holds nothing for them save the memory of death and the outlook of further death, and that many, if not most, would prefer going to Palestine.

While Miss Syrkin was able to report that in Western and Northern Europe persecuted Jews frequently received help from their Christian compatriots, she learned that things were quite different in the East: the Palestinian parachutists had to pose as Welshmen when dealing with Croatian partisans, and Polish, Lithuanian, or Ukrainian guerillas were as likely to attack Jewish partisans as to cooperate with them. With this background of treachery is it then surprising that many Jewish survivors are reluctant to start life anew in their old homes? Were the *Exodus* 1947 passengers just plain stubborn—or were they far-sighted?

True, not every Jew of New York or Melbourne, Naples or Brussels may wish to live in Daphne in Upper Galilee; but to people who had gone through the hell of Nazi concentration camps, or who had fought German tanks with clubs and stones, this settlement constitutes *Gan Eden*, the Garden of Paradise: "This is our place," a young woman, a veteran from the Warsaw Ghetto Battle, said to the author as they looked at the patches of fresh green among the stretches of bare desert which is Daphne: "This is what we dreamt of in Poland. It gave us the strength to survive." Could there be anyone so callous, or so completely blinded by prejudice as not to feel moved by that woman's simple words?

Miss Syrkin does not attempt to glamorize the people she describes. She is free of self-pity: wherever she tells of the ghastly atrocities committed by the fascists she uses these dark shades in a Rembrandtesque manner which makes the self-sacrifice of her heroes and heroines shine more brightly. Nor does she glorify war as an end-value; her Hanna Senesch who sang "Blessed is the match that is consumed in kindling fire . . . blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honor's sake" would have preferred to toil in Daphne rather than to die heroically before a Nazi firing squad. Miss Syrkin insists on saying that



"the spirit of Jewish resistance is not truly portrayed if one ends on a note of death, even heroic death." For Palestine, where many resisters have found refuge, and where many more will find homes and happiness, is a land of life, and the strange army, whose story Miss Syrkin has told us so movingly, has as its greeting the Hebrew word for peace—*shalom*.

ALFRED WERNER

*Continental Journey*, by Leo A. Lerner. Citadel Press. 214 pp. \$2.50.

Since the end of World War II lengthy and scholarly volumes have appeared on post-war conditions in Europe. There have been some excellent reporting and many learned treatises and tracts on the political and the economic physiognomy of the current European map. Little has emerged, however, that would give the reader a sense of intimacy with the men or women struggling to live through and rise above the horror in the aftermath of the recent great calamity.

Leo A. Lerner, a Chicago publisher, communal leader, and social worker, has attempted to do just that in his *Continental Journey*. In the space of a little more than three months he visited seven countries. He met drugstore proprietors and he dined with princes. He walked the streets of Paris and Prague and he journeyed to the offices of the titular heads of newly founded governments to learn at first hand something of the policies, failures, and successes of a new deal in Warsaw and in Rome.

A trained American journalist, Lerner brought along—aside from an insatiable curiosity—a sense of healthy skepticism and a gift of seeing things in their proper perspective. He saw want, devastation, and the despair that comes from frustration. And yet he found the opportunity to observe the incongruous and the pathetically "amusing" side of things, the telling of which evokes in the reader a broad smile that often may be frozen upon reading a subsequent chapter in his book.

While a firm believer in help to assist Europe restore its economy and rebuild its shattered industries, it is Lerner's thesis that if left alone to work out its own salvation Europe will, eventually, muddle through to an independent self-sustaining order of being. The problem is, of course, more complicated in Poland

than it is in England; more progress in this direction is being made in Czechoslovakia than in Italy. France, the victim of cruel oppression, he found more cheerful than he did Switzerland, fat, prosperous, and unscathed because of its policy of "neutrality" during the war.

*Continental Journey* is never dull, is always stimulating, and though it deals with harsh realities and the bleakness of a stricken people it leaves the reader hopeful of better things to come.

BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

*Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy*, 1947. Staff of The International Studies Group of Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. 303 pp. \$1.50.

A crying need in the field of foreign policy writing has at last been met. That need was for a scholarly, analytical presentation of current problems of foreign policy, which would include not only historical background data and details, but, as well, would point-up the immediate manifold factors that impinge upon the makers of American policy as they scrutinize alternative programs with a view to making a definitive choice.

The Study Guide prepared by Brookings Institution is the first major attempt at such an ambitious work—initiated under the directorship of Leo Pasvolksy, former special technical adviser to Secretaries of State Hull, Stettinius, and Byrnes. It outlines for discussion the major issues in present-day international affairs, i.e., peace treaties, economic and social problems, political problems, security. However, the major contribution of Pasvolksy and his colleagues is the unique analysis of the current problems of American foreign policy in a form approximating that utilized by the responsible officials of the government.

A State Department "policy-paper" usually includes a condensed summary of the main facts and of the conclusions drawn from the facts, followed by several alternative "policy" proposals, with a preferred course of action. The Study Guide follows this State Department technique very closely, but in the interest of its fair and objective purpose the "policy" recommendations are omitted—thereby granting the reader the opportunity and luxury of quarter-backing Administration policy.

Foreign policy-making is a highly com-

plex and infinitely precarious operation. Complex, because it involves consideration not only of immediate and potential ambitions of other nations, but, as well, of the political climate in the home state (i.e., how many Congressmen will vote favourably and how large a segment of public opinion will give full support). Precarious, because a wise policy and program conceived and dedicated under one framework of reference may have to be implemented and carried out under entirely different conditions. Although the Study Guide alludes to this elusive and frustrating situation, it does so only by indirection, and, thereby, falls short of its own high expectations.

All-in-all, the stature of this brilliant work places it at the top of the "must" reading for both scholar and layman. Its presentation of factual material is honest and complete, though it suffers somewhat from the minimum of interpretation. The four sample "policy-papers" deal with the German problem, the Marshall Plan, the American policy in China, and the Atomic Energy question. Perhaps it is too much to ask even the Brookings Institution to forego its patriotic, nationalistic fervor; yet, a certain bias is clearly evident in the policy-papers on Germany and on Atomic Energy. Its failures to do proper justice to the reparations problem and the reconstruction needs of the Soviet Union reveals a benign acquiescence to the official view of the State Department. Furthermore, to suggest that there is no reasonable alternative to either the Baruch Plan or the Gromyko Plan indicates either a lack of independent scholarship or a reluctance to be anything but politic and nationalistic. To insist as does the Study Guide (and incidentally American policy in the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission) that our demand for removal of the "veto" on sanctions is consistent with the General Assembly resolution (December 14, 1946) is highly confusing, if not nefarious. As a matter of fact, the UN Assembly specifically declared that international control of atomic energy shall be created "within the framework of the Security Council" (*italics mine*), not within the United Nations, which the United States piously demands so as to create a separate, distinct super-organ. The UN resolution plainly and obviously provided for retention of the big-power "veto" in en-

forcement procedure (even of atomic violations), though it did not preclude majority-vote on day-to-day decisions—a concession the Soviet Union reluctantly agreed to. The Brookings Study Guide should and could have declared with complete candor that neither Russia nor the United States is anxious to achieve compromise on the atom; that each prefers to remain adamant on its own proposals that are clearly unacceptable to the other, so as to place the stigma for intransigence upon its opponent.

Despite these exceptions, the Guide's realistic approach and fair and objective presentation meets a real need for both the academician and the amateur, the savant and the superficial public. An up-to-date monthly supplement will be issued entitled: "Summary of Developments in Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy." Each year a completely new Study Guide will be prepared and published for the benefit of those who wish a new and refreshing perspective on international affairs.

ALFRED J. HOTZ

F. D. R. *His Personal Letters. Early Years.* Foreword by Eleanor Roosevelt. Edited by Elliott Roosevelt. Duell, Sloan and Pearce. 543 pp. \$5.00.

Every book about F. D. R. will interest those who are concerned with the growth of democratic rights.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is undoubtedly one of the major figures of modern history. This will be conceded by all. In peace and war, he played a dynamic role in every life. His influence will survive many years; it may well be for centuries. It is, therefore, essential that we learn as much as possible about him, not only that we may understand all that he said and did, but that we may chart our ways in the difficult, perhaps tragic, days that lie ahead.

Fortunately, there is an amazingly good and complete record of Roosevelt almost from the moment of his birth. His doting mother must have had foreknowledge of his place in the history of his country; for from the first she saved every scrap of paper bearing his handwriting, and it is these scraps of paper which make up this fascinating book. Roosevelt himself had a well developed sense of history, just as Lincoln had. But in the case of

Lincoln we must be content with fragments, or less. With Roosevelt we have an almost day by day memorial.

For those like this reviewer, who loved F. D. R. in life and revere him increasingly with the years, it is difficult to lay down this book, once it is opened. It contains these hundreds of unself-conscious letters written by a boy to his Mama and Papa and others. These letters are given with the necessary explanatory notes, and many of them are also reproduced in facsimile, in which form they take a greater interest and significance. In addition there are many wonderful snapshots and photographs of F. D. R., his family, friends, and surroundings.

It is significant that Elliott Roosevelt, the stormy petrel of the family, is the editor of this series; with the obvious blessing of his mother. This would indicate that young Elliott may be regarded by the family as truly familiar with the thought pattern of F. D. R., which would indicate that he, rather than James F. Byrnes, knew what the harassed President really thought about Russia and other such moot matters in his last months of life. Of course, such things are not the themes of this early record and what we say is highly speculative, but we do find here and there traces of the future man.

We learn that the boy had the normal lad's interest in athletics and outdoor life, hobbies, amusements, sweets; and that without being an outstanding scholar or thinker, he had a good scholastic record, an interest in public issues, some measure of intellectual curiosity, flights of humor, loyalty for family and friends, and a deep affection for his beautiful mother. It is clear that Sara Delano Roosevelt tried to dominate his life; but it is equally clear that he resisted her efforts to make him wholly Mama's boy. There is, of course, the now famous episode of his taking Eleanor as his wife without asking his mother's approval; and there are even earlier evidences of his independence. I recall one boyhood letter in which he told Mama: "Please don't make any more arrangements for my future happiness."

At one point, young Franklin wrote to his mother of cousin Theodore's visit to Groton and that the President had invited him to Oyster Bay for a little holiday and that he had accepted. Apparently, his mother did not like that arrangement, but we are not told why.

He had a surprising sense of self-criticism, knowing when he was good or bad in any sport or study. Once he wrote to his mother: "I have been playing baseball all day, and I am on a new team which is called the BBBB or Bum Base Ball Boys. It has no captain but is a republic and is made up of about the worst players in the school."

He was deeply impressed when a group of Negroes and Indians came from Hampton Institute and he asked his mother if he might make a cash contribution from her funds. It is difficult to gauge his early attitude towards the Jews, either at the High Church Groton or at cultivated Harvard.

One can go through this book almost page by page and find rewarding passages. It is not that anything is particularly well written or literary. These are letters without a pose or strut in them. Therein lies their great value. They will be consulted by future students of this titan of our age, because they show him as he was.

In one early letter from Groton, FDR (incidentally, even as a boy, he often signed himself with those now famous initials) mentioned that "a McCormick boy from Chicago" had just come to the school. That Chicago boy was our Robert R. McCormick, then called "Rufus." There are other foreshadowings here of the future.

Most readers will leave this book reluctantly and all will look forward to the later volumes, in which the lines will become sharper and the shadows darker. We shall find a wiser but still gay man groping towards peace and maturity. Though we know the story, it retains its freshness for us, and probably for the ages.

ELMER GERTZ

*Basic Judaism*, by Milton Steinberg. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York. Pp. ix + 172. \$2.50.

A book like "Gentleman's Agreement" or a picture like "Crossfire" arouses the interest of many Jews and may stir many non-Jews into the realization of the evils of anti-Semitism not only as it affects the Jew but as a menace to the truly American way of thinking and living. It is, however, of even greater importance and more urgent to bring to the attention of non-Jews as well as Jews a book like *Basic Judaism* by Rabbi Milton Steinberg.

*Basic Judaism*, as the author states in his preface, "is a book about the Jewish Religion. Not about Jews, or Jewish problems, or Jewish culture, or Zionism, but about those beliefs, ideals, and practices which make up the historic Jewish faith." This book is helpful to the religious and observant Jew insofar as it gives him a rationale for his faith, a sense of the adequacy of Judaism for the individual Jew and a genuine pride in the Jewish faith that has done and can still do much good for the Jew and for the progress of humanity as well.

Jews who are indifferent to Jewish religious beliefs and practices, due to the lack of Jewish training or to the allurements of the secular and materialistic non-religious way of thinking and living are informed in this book, without preaching or exhortation, as to the meaningfulness of Jewish beliefs and the consequent satisfaction that inheres in the observance of Jewish religious practices. The author ingeniously shows that for the Jew the observance of the "particularistic" Jewish rites and ritual has cosmic value as does the belief in ethical monotheism, which, in various forms, is now a part of the Judeo-Christian-Mahomedan tradition.

Instead of adhering to the well-known distinctions of the Jewish religious grouping, such as orthodox, reform, conservative, and reconstruction, Rabbi Steinberg reduces these distinctions to the traditionalist and modernist interpretations of the Jewish religion. The traditionalist holds to the belief in the literal account of the Revelation at Sinai. The modernist accepts the evolutionary theory of the Bible. To paraphrase the oft-quoted Talmudic phrase, he shows that, like the opinions of the ancient schools of Hillel and Shammai, "Both opinions are the word of the living God" and whichever road a Jew follows will be the path of Godliness and righteousness.

His discussions of the interwoven strands that form the design and pattern of *Basic Judaism*, namely the cardinal concepts of the Jewish religion, such as Torah, God, the good life, Israel and the nations, the Jewish judgment of Christianity, Jewish religious practices, the world-to-come, are excellent themes for discourses and provocative subjects of discussion.

Non-Jews who have no knowledge of

Judaism or whose knowledge is not authentic and even confused, will find in this book, *Basic Judaism* a satisfactory basis for further and deeper inquiry as to what the Jewish religion really is, what it has achieved, and what it can achieve for humanity as well as for the observant Jew, if it is actually a way of Jewish thinking and living and not merely another topic for discussion.

MORRIS TELLER

*The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy*, by Walter Lippmann. 62 pp. Harper and Brothers. \$1.00.

This little book is made up of a series of syndicated articles which appeared recently in the *Chicago Sun* and other newspapers. It is a pamphlet rather than a typical Lippmann treatise and has one primary aim: to denounce that policy of the State Department which goes under the name of the Truman Doctrine.

Lippmann's attack is directed against a semi-official statement of policy which appeared under the signature of a "Mr. X," published in the quarterly *Foreign Affairs*. Mr. X has since been identified as George F. Kennan, director of the Policy Planning Board for the Department of State. In this article Kennan called for a "containment" of the U.S.S.R. with "unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." This policy is predicated upon the assumptions that Soviet Russia must henceforth be regarded as "a rival, not a partner, in the political arena," that "the Soviet government reflects no abstract love of peace and stability, no real faith in the possibility of a permanently happy co-existence of the socialist and capitalist worlds, but rather a continuous persistent pressure towards the disruption and weakening of all rival influence and rival power."

This, then, is the basic policy of the State Department. It is the Truman Doctrine, rather than the Marshall Plan, which still attracts the minds who control our foreign affairs. Lippmann is opposed to this policy on the pragmatic ground that it will not work. His disagreement with Kennan is fundamentally one with respect to the means and instruments of our foreign policy rather than with its basic ends, though it is true that means and ends cannot be completely divorced. Lippmann writes that he "agrees entirely"



with Kennan that "the Soviet power will expand unless it is prevented from expanding with power, primarily American power that it must respect." He believes, however, that the Truman Doctrine cannot be made to work and that it will instead cause us to squander our substance and our prestige.

Lippmann's specific criticism is that our present policy gives the initiative to Soviet Russia, that it requires us to adapt ourselves to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy at a series of constantly shifting geographical points, that we must rely on weak and unstable allies. The net result, he holds, is to create a "strategical monstrosity."

His own recommendations also rest on certain premises. His basic assumption is that a settlement with the U.S.S.R. is possible, and that we should not take a defeatist position with respect to the possibility of such a settlement. He interprets the expansions of Russia since the war not as being the first moves of a power seeking to dominate the earth, but rather as the fulfillment of the dreams of the Czars to dominate the area which surrounds Russia in Eastern Europe. If we interpret Russia's territorial acquisitions in this manner, says Lippmann, then a peaceful settlement is possible. The next problem is the manner in which it may be achieved. The indispensable condition for such a settlement, he contends, is the withdrawal of the non-European armies from Europe. The prerequisite of such a withdrawal is the signing of peace treaties with all of the defeated powers. A ransom may be required to get such a withdrawal of the Russian armies, but a high ransom will be justified, for only when the Russian armies are withdrawn behind the Russian frontiers will Europe be able once again to lead a normal existence. Lippmann is not worried about the Communist parties which Russia will leave behind her, for these parties are what he calls a "fifth column" whose power depends upon the other "four columns" constituted by the Red Army.

In the meantime the U.S. should cease and desist from its attempts to control the eastern Mediterranean area, but should concentrate on building up a binding friendship with the western democracies, our natural allies. Our military powers are not adapted to "opposing the U.S.S.R. with counterforce" all over the earth.

Once the Russian armies have withdrawn, the basis for peace will be established, and the enigmatic implications of the present situation will be removed. The nations which were liberated from the Nazis will then be free from the rule of alien powers, and this is a moral ideal which will justify itself to all the nations of the earth.

It may be noted that Lippmann has ignored the role of the United Nations in the present crisis. "The Charter and the organization of the United Nations," he writes, "are designed to maintain peace after a settlement of the Second World War has been arrived at . . . the United Nations cannot deal with disputes that involve the balance of power in the world."

Lippmann's fundamental disagreement with the State Department lies in the field of strategy and in his assumption that a settlement with Russia is possible. This assumption represents Lippmann's real contribution to our thinking. Mr. Byrnes, in his *Speaking Frankly*, told us that his policy changed from one of "patience and firmness" to "firmness and patience" in his dealings with Molotov, but our State Department seems finally to have arrived at a policy of firmness without patience. Russia has been difficult, but our statesmen should not become despondent. It is the business of diplomacy to find a settlement, not to abandon the job as impossible. Lippmann has pointed to a concrete manner in which this objective may be achieved.

LIONEL RUBY

*Eagle At My Eyes*, by Norman Katkov. Doubleday & Co. 252 pp. \$2.75.

If ever I was anxious to learn upon finishing a book whether the chief characters in the novel lived "happily thereafter" that volume is *Eagle At My Eyes*. It is a book about intermarriage, the boy a Jew, and the girl the Gentile. The boy is willing to marry, the girl is anxious too, but the families of both disapprove.

The locale is a city in the state of Minnesota, a metropolis in which it is difficult to pass unnoticed the courtship of a prominent girl. The couple finally marries and, before long, the young woman makes demands upon the husband that he identify himself, socially, with her "set." The young man resists her importunities and the crux of the volume is the indictment that he levels against an environment in which he sees a tacit, frequently un-

spoken "gentleman's agreement" to bar him—and his fellow Jews—from full public enjoyment of the boons of American democracy and reduce him and his people to second class citizenship.

The implacability of the orthodox Jew to the inroad a Christian would make upon the Jewish family is strikingly delineated in the character of the mother of the boy—she is uncompromising to the end; in juxtaposition there is, also, the sharply drawn character of the father of the girl, the aloof and the disdainful anti-Semite.

Above all, however, there towers the figure of the deeply understanding father of the boy. He is truly a man of pathos who would shelter the son against the relentless march of a modern civilization and keep him securely in the folds of Judaism; by parable and anecdote, a recital of his own experiences and profound sympathy with the plight of his son, he looms an indelible picture in the mind of the reader.

Confronted with the choice of leaving his wife forever or joining with her on her terms the husband abandons old loyalties and surrenders to an alternative that he loathes.

It would be a cliché to state that this is a controversial book. Norman Katkov has written a powerful novel the basis of which is a tract on intermarriage. His hero reluctant and hating goes forth into a milieu that he despises with a threatening "here I come, bastards" on his lips. It is a surrender, nevertheless. A marriage founded on so ominous a threat and so precarious a note is doomed to eventual failure. I so interpret Katkov's verdict and findings in his discourse on the problem of intermarriage.

BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

*Our Unfinished World*, by Eli A. Almi. Arco Publishing Co. 205 pp. \$3.00.

This book would teach the reader the ways of a better life and a mode of existence enriched by meditation and introspection. It is a plea to invoke the power of reason to prove that light is better than darkness.

All this may sound as an invitation to boredom, provoked, often, by dull sermons on hackneyed themes. That, it is decidedly not. Almi's book is astonish-

ingly refreshing and unpretentiously done. His canvass is vast; he would chat:

"briefly, and to the point, on various subjects—complex and yet simple subjects: on religion and science, on friendship and love, on ethics and etiquette, on man and woman, on marriage and children, on life and death and immortality and on other relevant subjects, in brief on everything which is human and which should, therefore, be of concern to you."

It is a happy experience to follow the author in his quest for truth and to sample of his efforts to illustrate by parable, anecdote, story, or a bold line an illuminating point of view. He despises sham and he exalts the concept of common sense. Some of the titles in *Our Unfinished World* are: Does Refusal To Fight Make One A Coward?; Sleep And Death; Each One Of Us Is An Atomic Bomb; Reading History; Hollywood Falsification Of Life; and there are dozens of others, each concerned with a facet of human endeavor, and the author's thesis to expose a fallacy and cheer the reader on to the appreciation of the wholesome and the real. Nowhere is the book oppressively didactic or condescendingly erudite. Almi's technique to engage his audience and keep up its interest may be envied.

B. W.

#### RECENT BOOKS BY THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM CONTRIBUTORS

The Forum is pleased to note the appearance of the following books by its contributors:

HAROLD APPLEBAUM—*Solo, and Other Poems*. Creative Age Press. \$2.50.

OTTO EISENSCHIML & RALPH NEWMAN—*The American Iliad*. Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$5.00.

CARL H. GRABO—*The Creative Critic*. University of Chicago Press. \$3.00.

LEO A. LERNER—*Continental Journey*. Citadel Press. \$2.50.

CAREY McWILLIAMS—*A Mask for Privilege*. Little Brown & Co. \$2.75.

HAROLD U. RIBALOW—*The Jew in American Sports*. Bloch Publishing Company. \$3.00.

LIONEL RUBY—*Logic*. Privately Printed. \$2.00.

HARVEY WISH—*Contemporary American*. Harper & Bros. \$4.00.

